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# YOUR RELIGION

What It Means To You

BY

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DUBUQUE, IOWA

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## FOREWORD

Until the Middle Ages there does not appear to have been much difference in general method between catechizing and preaching. Religious instruction was given much after the manner of our low Mass instruction-sermons. Instruction and appeal were intimately blended.

With however the medieval systematization of doctrine and, later, with exigencies of post-Reformation controversy, catechesis and preaching parted company. Catechesis took a detour. So far at least as textbooks were concerned, catechesis was largely shorn of its elements of appeal and persuasion and rendered predominantly informational and academic. Theological and controversial influences carried the day, and religious education texts were in no small measure narrowed down to religious instruction texts.

There is a widespread feeling among Catholic educators today that we should do well to return to our earlier and normal Catholic tradition, and to re-introduce into our texts the appeal elements of our original Catholic catechesis. Father Russell's text represents an endeavor to return from a long detour into the main boulevard.

Clearness in exposition stands out on every page, but

it is a clearness that is vibrant with warmth and life. As in Apostolic days, the appeal centers around the magnetic personality of the Saviour of us all. And writing for middle adolescents, the author puts into the foreground Christ's inspiring leadership. Good Catholic tradition, good psychology here meet and wed. May the reunion of these twain last long and prosper.

JOHN M. COOPER

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## INTRODUCTION

This book is an attempt to weave the teaching of religious truths and practices around the personality of Christ. Closeness to Christ Himself, Christ as interpreted by the Church, has always been a sure means of developing the true Christian spirit. Young minds more readily accept the implications of a doctrine or of a precept if they know that it comes from someone to whom they are attached. Since religion is successfully taught only when the traits of Christ are reproduced in those who are to present Him to the world, this volume aims to bring the reader into a more personal contact with Christ.

Changes in manner of living necessitate changes in methods of teaching. Since the present age is more interested in the personal element than in controversy, there is more of an insistence on the student's learning to live his religion. The liturgical movement, so earnestly sponsored by Pope Pius X, is an indication of the desire to keep close to the true Catholic spirit, to the life as lived by Christ. "That Christ be formed in all" was the motto set forth by Pius X. The Catholic, while fortunate in having his dogmas as a basis for his moral living, must realize that, since the non-Catholic world has little dogma, it will pay more attention to

the manner in which one acts. For the edification of such people it is more than ever necessary that the Catholic learn to "put on Christ."

The Catholic plan of life shuns the stark individualism of the naturalist in religion, yet upholds the true dignity of the individual. The Catholic recognizes the sacredness of each individual soul. The Catholic likewise realizes the personal responsibility of each soul. No one can give the young an appreciation of their religion. They themselves must put forth the effort to appreciate it. God does not force His graces upon us; He sows the seed and awaits development.

Friendship with Christ allows for individual growth and stresses individual responsibility. Throughout this book the author aims to make Christ the central figure in each growing life. He aims to leave the student with the conviction that religion, as a study, is a life-effort, and, as a virtue, is acquired only through personal striving. The purpose of this book is to instil a spirit and to develop an attitude. The text insists not only on knowledge, but on an effort to acquire the spirit of Christ. The class in religion should not be a mere class exercise, but another "Mount of Transfiguration," where a glimpse of the divine Teacher may be had. The teacher of religion must be an expert in leading others to self-development, and to the imitation of Christ. The teacher of religion incites to virtue.

When used as a textbook, this volume is best adapted to the discussional method in class. Merely asking for



the content of each chapter will not insure the successful use of the book as a text. Our Lord discussed concrete cases with His Apostles. The teacher of religion must be able to attach religion to concrete situations in the lives of the students. This book is intended to supply principles which may form a basis for discussion. If Christ's principles are to be present to the young minds in all situations of life—at home, on the street, in school, at play, then provision must be made by the teacher for the discussion of the personal and individual problems that will arise. Individual responsibility on the part of the student earns him the right to present his problems and to have them aired in class.

Discussion is profitable when it is linked with serious work outside of class. A word, a phrase, a sentence that has been studied by the students might be placed on the blackboard and views and interpretations recorded beneath it. The author suggests that sentences from the text be placed on the board frequently and the students asked for their interpretations, which interpretations are also placed on the board. Many attitudes and views will undergo a change. Discussion will make the duties seem more personal.

When used as a textbook this volume should be placed in the last year of senior high school. It is intended that other works be used to supplement the material outlined in this book. A standard Church history should be at hand during the first semester for

reference and for fuller treatment of some subjects. In the second semester a supply of pamphlets would aid in the work, but where they are not available, students should collect material from magazines and newspapers. A number of references have been made to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, because this work is now quite universally in use. If it is not available in the school, inquiry will most likely reveal its presence somewhere in the neighborhood. It may be found that some classes are in need of material not treated in this text. In such cases the teacher should supply from the Catechism. The text does not furnish complete treatment of such subjects as the virtues, sins, prayer, etc., because those subjects receive earlier treatment in the course of which this text is a part. Where outside references are made, the teacher will have them looked up ahead of time by some members of the class specially appointed for the purpose.

The author has employed the material of the text in his religion classes during the past few years. The original suggestion and continued encouragement for the publication of the notes is due to Dr. Cooper of the Catholic University of America. Members of the teaching staff of Columbia Academy and also of Columbia College have given the author very valuable assistance. Monsignor Conry of Columbia College, Dr. Wolfe, archdiocesan superintendent of schools, and Father Boeding of Sacred Heart Parish, Dubuque, kindly read the notes and suggested changes, as did

other friends in Dubuque. Dr. Kerby of the Catholic University revised some of the chapters and Dr. Miltnner, C.S.C., of Notre Dame University read the notes very carefully. Suggestions were also given by Father Walter Reger, O.S.B., of St. John's University, Collegeville, Minn., and by members of different teaching sisterhoods.



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## CHAPTER I

### THE PURPOSE OF ATTENDING A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**LIFE IS A GAME** Do games arouse your sporting blood? Quite frequently a contest or a game will bring out the best in a boy or a girl. It is indeed natural that you should enjoy these tests of skill; but have you ever realized that the keenest game of all is life? Even before you were able to walk the start was made. For many years you were groomed and put through exercises that were intended to help you win in life. Now you are learning to make your own decisions.

Contests with others are not nearly so important, nor so hard, as this game of life. Just think, a whole eternity, unending centuries, are in store for you after your exit from the game of life. Certainly you ought to be interested in how you are going to be situated in eternity; for it is certain that your actions here will determine your condition there.

**GETTING SET RIGHT** Before starting out for yourself it will be well to know the rules of this game of life. That is the reason for your being here at school. You did not come here to get away from work, to lead an easy life, to make the team, or to obtain a diploma. Such thoughts may

have occurred to you, but if you are anything more than a parasite, then you ought to realize that there is a serious purpose behind your being here. Try to put that purpose into writing, just for your private convenience.

Is there a longing in your heart to reach a certain goal? Well and good. Do not lose sight of the goal, if it be a worthy one. Were you indifferent and did you come to school merely because you were sent? Then, why not place a goal before you? You have observed the plight of older people who were of the aimless type. Were you kept in school largely for correction—too hard to satisfy at home, too inclined to go downward? Try the opposite for a while. Impose a little self-denial upon yourself; learn to be master of your own soul and of your desires. After a year of such effort, note the difference in your disposition and in your conscience. You have possibilities for good as well as for evil, and you cheat yourself if you attempt the selfish or the crooked way. The school should help you to unearth that hidden, better self that is somewhere within you. Most young people who go wrong have a mistaken idea of what “a good time” is, or of what “success” is. In such questions the school helps to set you right.

## THE BIG PURPOSE

There may be individual aims for attendance at high school, but at the same time there is a common, under-

lying purpose in it all. *You are here to take on some of the qualities of Christ.* The school aims primarily to help you to develop a deep and abiding friendship with Christ. No matter what you hear in common talk, the fact is that friendship with Christ makes for manhood and womanhood. So a big event in your life would be the acquisition of a friendship with Our Lord.

The secret of such a friendship is found in the Catholic religion. The school will try to show you the proper place of religion in your life. If you win in the most important struggle here, you will know that virtue is mightier than vice, that industry and honor pay better than sloth and deceit, that self-control brings higher joy than self-indulgence.

Your religion is not man-made. It does not change with the fashions. It has ages of history behind it. It contains wondrous joys and insights for you, if you will but take the time to pray and search for them. It gives you definite, ennobling answers to the big questions of life. Millions have lived and died in its fold, and it still looks confidently to the future. The Catholic Church is still a Church for young people.

Of course, the effort to win in the game of life, and to reach the purpose of being at school, will require grit, perseverance, and time. St. Ignatius was thirty-three when he began the study of Latin, but he won, because he had determination and an aim. You can also win if you develop the proper qualities and follow an aim. It is hoped that after this year's schooling,

you will go home more respectful towards your parents and more thoughtful of their spiritual and physical comfort. Frequent Communion, prayer, high ideals, clean conversation, clean habits, are good comrades for you to have. They help you to attain the big purpose, which is to "put on Christ."

**THE CLASS IN RELIGION** In order that they be loyal to their principles, all Catholic schools conduct religion classes. These classes do not make merely for intellectual effort on your part, because the Catholic Faith is not simply a system of human knowledge for you to learn. There is a spirit to be acquired, an attitude of mind to be developed, spiritual aids to be given to those who show coöperation. In your religion classes you must seek to develop this spirit. Catholic schools aim to aid you to comprehend the meaning, the depth, the beauty, the truth of your age-old Faith, and also to obtain an inkling of the "charity of Christ which surpasses all knowledge."

But the class in religion can only be a help. The main work must be done by you, aided, of course, by God's grace. Final results will depend on the *efforts you put forth to coöperate with God*. Would it not be sad if you would one day have to appear before the infinite Judge and to admit that you have not "seen" anything in your religion? The world knows that love of Christ makes men and women of sterling character. So your parents, relatives, and best friends

expect you to "put on Christ." Let the class in religion be your guide while you think over what Christ meant when He said: "Abide in Me."

## APPLICATIONS

1. Write out three advantages possessed by a young person with a definite aim in life (1).\* Two students seek to reach a tree which is in the middle of a field freshly covered with snow. The one keeps his eyes on the tree; the other keeps his eyes on his steps. Who has the better method?

2. What is wrong with the attitude of those who are afraid to be considered deeply religious?

3. See if you can find a text in the New Testament showing that Christ kept a definite aim before Him. And then write your interpretation of this quotation: "We see Him wrapt in deep thought, speaking words that set the wisest pondering, yet withal in such simplicity that the children understand Him; looking out beyond the limit of life, yet not a flower in the field, or a bird in the air, or an outcast cripple on the road-side is forgotten; with a toiler's hand and brain and heart, and ambition consumed with eagerness for labor, yet ever ready to yield up His task when His companionship is needed; consumed with zeal for His Father's house, with zeal for truth and justice, yet patient and pitiful even as he smites, gentle as the gentlest mother" (Most Rev. Alban Goodier, S. J.).

\* References will be found in the back of the book, just before the index.

## CHAPTER II

### A. THE NEED OF GOD

#### **YOUTH- FUL FANCY**

When about to finish school and to enter the world, boys and girls sometimes feel within themselves attitudes of mastery and superiority. They are young; they abound in health and vigor; they are impatient to step over the threshold of life, and to prove themselves masters of its mysteries. No problem seems too hard for them to handle, no puzzle too difficult to solve.

#### **THE MYS- TERY OF NATURE**

Reflect for just a few minutes. Try yourself out on a few of the following questions. Do you remember how you felt when you were out in the woods and a storm suddenly broke, and lightning flashed, and thunder rolled? Did not a sense of helplessness grip you? Were you ever in a row-boat on a stormy lake? Did you not feel rather small and insignificant against those waves? Look at the marvels of nature around you. "Didst thou since thy birth command the morning and show the dawning of the



day its place?" "Hast thou entered into the storehouse of the snow and hast thou beheld the treasures of the hail?" "Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds that an abundance of water may cover thee?" "Will the eagle mount up at thy command and make her nest in the high places?" (Job, XXXVIII sq.). Can you outdo the sun that sends its heat 93,000,000 miles, and then draws up from the ocean vapor which comes down again in the form of rain?

Surely, you cannot master such things in nature. Is not a divine Being needed to explain how those things came about, how they are managed?

### THE MYSTERY OF YOUR-SELF

There is much about yourself that you find hard to explain. If you are addicted to the frequent use of the pronoun "I," recall this sentence of St. Paul: "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" (1 Cor. IV, 7). Did you have anything to do with your coming into this world? Do you know when, and under what circumstances, you are going to leave it? If you have been gifted with a strong constitution, what is going to restrain you from misusing your strength? Can you grow as you wish? Can you improve on the Artist Who fashioned your countenance?

Do you think that the world takes great notice of your presence here? An individual appears very

small in the midst of the world's multitudes, for, "all that walk the earth are but a handful to the tribes that slumber in its bosom." What, then, urges you to feel so significant? And can you explain why you desire so strongly to be happy, to live on, to make a great name for yourself? If you did not have the light of your religion, how would you answer the questions: "Who am I?" "Where did I come from?" "Where am I going?"

### **THE MYSTERY OF LIFE**

There is also much about life that puzzles a boy or girl. Where did life originate? Is there another life beyond the grave? What is going to happen to you in that next life? As you look on the face of a dead father or mother, these questions come to you. And, if a man tells you that your parents have passed into nothingness, you rebel at such a statement. Sickness, disease, misery, unhappiness surround you. Do you expect to escape them? Also, you have noticed that some work hard in life, while others loaf. And the good seem frequently to suffer more than the bad. Is it to be so always? Will things ever be righted?

### **GOD**

After all, a human individual is rather small before the marvels of nature. He is humbled when he thinks of how little control he really has over himself or his life. Is not life too big a problem for you to solve alone? Truly,

to explain life, to give a meaning to life, you need *God*—the Creator, Father, Guide. *He alone is the explanation of all these mysteries.*

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Many appear to get along without God. How, then, can we argue for a need of God?

2. Why do so many make wealth or pleasure their god? A man's religion is his set of answers to the important questions of the meaning of life. No man is without this set of answers. If he does not accept God's rule, then he substitutes some other rule. If money is his goal, then money is his religion and he rejects God. Will you choose a true or a false God?

3. Who but God could satisfy your need for happiness, for peace? You feel those longings, you are restless and dissatisfied with what the world gives.

4. In each question compare the answer given by your religion to the opinion of the unbeliever and decide which is more reliable.

## B. THE EXISTENCE OF A GOD WHO HAS CREATED US, AND WHO CARES FOR US

### DESIGNER AND LAW- GIVER

Your first remark when you see a fine piece of workmanship is, that a clever artist must have made it.

Likewise, observation of the workmanship of this earth and the other planets, and of the make-up of the inhabitants of the earth, leads people to conclude that a MASTER-MIND fashioned

it all. Think of the power and intelligence of Him Who arranged the planets in their courses, Who is the cause of all life, Who gives to a little seed the possibilities that you know it to possess. A great English scientist has said: "This machinery of suns and planets could not originate except from the plan and power of an intelligent and mighty Being" (Newton). Study sometime the marvelous arrangement of the body of the honey bee. Who placed that instinct in the bee? Study the mathematical laws involved in the construction of a honey comb.

This argument is known as the argument from design. A designer must be behind every design. A finely built automobile draws from you an expression of admiration for the designer. What, then, think you, is the power of the infinite Designer of the world and of man? This is an old argument but it is as fresh as the dawn.

No sane man today thinks that these marvels of nature just "happened" by blind chance. "If there are laws of nature, it is only logical to admit that there is a Lawgiver" (2). That is the way they express the argument today. There is law and order in nature. No human being could have placed them there; we are, therefore, led to believe that there is a God Who placed His laws in nature. There is a God Who has arranged the laws whereby a human body develops. He is the Designer and the Lawgiver.

**YOUR  
CON-  
SCIENCE**

Why do you feel a pang of conscience when you do wrong? It is not merely a result of education. Everyone who is not totally depraved by vice feels himself responsible for his actions. And how can you explain this sense of responsibility, which is born in youth, unless you admit the existence of a supreme Lawgiver Who has implanted His laws, His standard, in the human conscience? The criminal feels remorse, not only because he has offended man, but chiefly because he feels accountable to Someone higher than man. So the voice of your conscience, approving or disapproving of certain actions, gives evidence of a Judge of all actions—*God*.

**THE OR-  
IGIN OF  
THINGS**

Both the world and the human beings that exist in the world had a beginning. But things could not begin to exist without a cause which was both outside of, and distinct from, them. Therefore, this first outside and distinct cause must have always existed; that is, it was never caused by any other cause. For instance, life did not commence of itself, but it resulted from the action of this *first, uncaused Cause*. The first motion must have come from a Being Who had always existed. Hence God—eternal, uncaused, infinite.

**UNIVER-  
SAL BE-  
LIEF**

All the nations of the world have believed and do believe in some form of a supreme being. No nation has been without prayer, or a temple of some sort, or sacrifice. "The statement that there are nations or tribes which possess no religion, rests either on inaccurate observation, or on a confusion of ideas. No tribe or nation has yet been met with, destitute of belief in any higher beings. . . . It is legitimate therefore to call religion in its most general sense, a universal phenomenon of humanity" (3). If all nations have believed in a God, can they be fundamentally wrong? It matters not that, as time went on, corruptions in belief crept in. The idea of a supreme being remained.

The four inset headings given above are the names of four arguments for the existence of an infinite, intelligent God. You see, men have always sought for an explanation of the order and harmony in nature, such as the wonderful power of the little seed. Men have been puzzled over what man himself is. When they studied it all, they could only come to the conclusion that God existed and was behind all things.

God is called the Creator, because, through His power, all things came into existence; and He must have had a design and a purpose in giving them existence. No other explanation will satisfy normal



men and women. Atheists are those who try to argue themselves out of a belief in God and out of their responsibility to Him.

“Dull atheist, could a giddy dance  
Of atoms lawless hurled  
Construct so wonderful, so wise,  
So harmonized a world?”

Since life without God is meaningless, we begin a course in religion with the existence of God. To learn the rules of the game of life, you must go to the Originator of life. Most people naturally believe in God. A few pretend not to believe in Him. Many never think of Him. You will meet all types. And since you possess the truth, you ought to be earnest in spreading it; others persist in spreading error.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Can you see the reason why some men like to profess atheism?
2. Why are not more men led to God by observing nature? By thinking about death?
3. Read the first two chapters of the Book of Genesis.
4. All the evidence goes to show that in the beginning men had a simple, clear notion of God, and corrupted it as time went on. Does this disprove the theory of the materialists that man “evolved” the idea of God, and that gradually this idea grew clear?

## CHAPTER III

### REVELATION

**WHAT IS IT?** Reflection and the voice of conscience have led men to profess God—the Ruler of the universe. But, of themselves, men were unable to learn all that this God had in mind when He created the human race. To make things clear, God told men something of Himself and His purpose in creating them.

This making known of the truth, this telling to man by God of what God is and why man is on earth, is what we understand by *Revelation*. God enlightened the human race; He communicated to people certain truths about Himself. By believing these truths, men can acquire a trustworthy knowledge of Him.

**IS SUCH A THING POSSIBLE?** The difference between Creator and creature is so great that some men have wondered if it were possible for such a Being to make anything known to mankind. Well, man cannot comprehend everything about God, but he can certainly learn something about Him. After having fashioned human nature, would not God be a poor architect if He were unable to

reveal His purpose to His own product? *God is really the Author of our nature.* He gave to man the faculties of thought and speech and the laws governing both. Why, then, could He not make use of these same laws in communicating with mankind? You can adapt your expressions to a child's understanding;—why could not God adapt His methods to human weakness?

**REVELA-  
TION IS  
NECES-  
SARY**

A manufacturer does not produce a fine automobile and then send it out without directions and a destination. Could God place us here on earth and then leave us in ignorance? “If man

has been created for some definite purpose, as it is to be supposed from an intelligent Creator, how can he learn the nature of that purpose, the goal assigned to him and the conditions of attaining it, unless he has received from God some indication of His wish, and some commands as to man's line of conduct?” (4).

Just as the eye needs light to see things, so human reason, which is the eye of the soul, needs Revelation to perceive the purposes of God. At its best, unaided human knowledge is subject to error, and if man were to depend on human knowledge alone, he could do no more than stumble through life, uncertain of God's will about himself. Think of what a difference Revelation makes in your life. You have heard of Socrates, one of the wisest of men. Long before Christ came, Socrates said: “It seems necessary to wait

until someone comes to instruct us on how we ought to conduct ourselves towards God and men."

**HOW REVELATION TOOK PLACE** In the Old Testament, God revealed Himself through the patriarchs and prophets. For instance, He revealed the Ten Commandments to Moses. Sometimes He sent angels in human form as His messengers to man (*e. g.*, to Abraham).

The most highly-accredited Messenger from God to man was Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He was always God, but in time He became Man, grew up as a Man—God and Man at the same time.

It was through Him that Christian Revelation took place. He informed the world for all time of the will of God. He told the world about God, and many of His words were preserved in the book known as the New Testament. After He had departed from this life, He appeared to St. Paul and told him many things (Gal. I, 11-12). There has been no more public Revelation since the death of St. John, who wrote the Apocalypse, the last book of the New Testament.

Pagans, seeking to explain the meaning of life, groped in the dark for centuries. Christ came and gave the answer to the great problems troubling men. His truths gave peace of soul, and direction to life. You have seen people running about a railroad station, not knowing which train to take. That is the way

many people acted, and still act, when they reject the truths that Christ brought.

In this course we are going to build everything around the Son of God. We are going to study His life and His words; then you will have something sure to enlighten you on how to act in the game of life.

**WHAT** (a) That God is our Creator, our  
**CHRIST** Father; that He cares for us.  
**RE-** (b) That by giving man a soul and  
**VEALED** by giving him spiritual helps, God  
thus elevated man and destined him  
to a union with Himself.

(c) That man is accountable to God for his actions.

(d) That there is a future, never-ending life beyond the grave. Man's choice must be between the bliss of God's presence, and the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth.

(e) That the Incarnate Son of God was here on earth to atone for Adam's fault, and thus make it possible for men again to earn their way into God's presence.

(f) That to learn how to enter eternal life, the human race must accept Christ's directions, or abide by the consequences.

**APPLICA-** 1. Can you see any reason why men  
**TIONS** should deny that God could reveal  
Himself? (Read Isaias, XXIX, 16).

2. A number of founders of religious sects have imagined that God appeared to them. What is usually lacking in their lives to confirm such a claim? What was present in the lives of the Prophets, or of St. Paul, to prove their teachings? (Exodus XIII, 21; Josue III, 7-17; Daniel VI, 22; 4 Kings, I, 12; Gal. I, 18, and II, 8-9).

3. Some men consider themselves capable of laying down the conditions under which God ought to reward or punish them. What is wrong with this claim?

4. In Exodus, XIX and XX, look up the circumstances connected with the giving of the Ten Commandments.

5. Under the Old Law, what was the motive for obedience to the Commandments? Did Christ change the motive?



## CHAPTER IV

### A RELIABLE HISTORY OF CHRIST

#### THE IM- POR- TANCE OF THIS HIS- TORY

The previous lesson has shown that, through divine Revelation, we learned a great deal about God, and that Christ was the main Figure in bringing this knowledge to the human race.

Now, if there is an obligation on each one of you, and on all of us, to accept what Christ brought, then you ought to be assured that you have an accurate record of His words and deeds. Think of the millions who are today staking their lives on the truth of what Christ said and did. Of course, as a Catholic, you do not need to depend on written records alone. You have the living, infallible voice of the Church to guide you, the same Church that has preserved the written records of the life of Christ.

The Bible has its own proper uses. For the present we are going to use the written record of Christ just as ordinary history. The New Testament gives us historical truth about Christ.

#### SCANT RECORDS

Christ was not widely known in His own day, because His race was ex-

## IN PRO- FANE HIS- TORY

clusive, and He Himself for thirty years led a secluded life. The greatest Man of history spent but three years in public.

Outside of the New Testament, history gives very few contemporary glimpses of Him Who changed the entire face of history. A Jewish writer, Flavius Josephus, gives some scant details of Christ's life. He would have said more, but He was writing to please a Roman and pagan world and had to be careful. Tacitus, a Roman writer, in his Annals says the following: "The author of the name of the Christian sect, Christ, was put to death in the reign of Tiberius, by the procurator Pontius Pilate" (Annals XV).

## THE NEW TESTA- MENT AS TRUE HIS- TORY

The oldest copy that we possess of the New Testament was written in the fourth century. But we have the writings of Christians of the third, the second, and even a few of the first century. They quote the New Testament frequently. Their quotations are the same as the words of the New Testament; thus we know that our copies are accurate. At that time there were numerous other writings claiming to be true records of Christ, but shortly before the year 400 the Church made the final decision on what was true and what was false. The false writings are so different from the genuine

New Testament that they bring out more strongly the truth as we have it.

During the last two centuries every possible form of attack has been made on the reliability of the New Testament. The writings of the Evangelists were called impostures; the miracles were said to be merely myths or fables; and, finally, the life of Christ was asserted to be a beautiful legend. The Word of God, however, still stands secure. Eminent non-Catholic scholars, like Adolph Harnack, have recognized the first three Gospels as true history. Enemies will, of course, continue to deny the value of the Bible, but most real scholars are now on the side of the Church.

### PROOFS OF ITS AUTHEN- TICITY

A book is authentic when it really is what it claims to be. Dr. Cooper of the Catholic University of America gives the following short argument concerning the authenticity of the books of the New Testament.

(A) These books were *written by eye-witnesses or contemporaries*. The first three Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, were written before 70 A. D., and the fourth, John, before 100 A. D. All faithfully portray the memories (and the Oriental memory is tenacious), convictions, impressions, and knowledge of eye-witnesses and contemporaries of Our Lord—many of them His intimate friends and disciples.

For (1) an unbroken tradition from the earliest days of Christianity confirms the Apostolic origin of the Gospels; (2) the early Christians excluded from the Bible any work not proven to be of Apostolic origin; (3) the Gospels are distinctly Jewish in spirit, in outlook, and (except Luke) in phraseology, even where the writers used the Greek language; (4) they most accurately reflect and describe the complex political, religious, social and geographical conditions of Palestine and Jerusalem as known to us from other sources; (5) they speak of Jerusalem as still a thriving city. The full force of these last three points becomes more evident when we recall that the great catastrophe of the destruction of the city by the Romans took place in 70 A. D., and put an abrupt and complete end to the old order of things in Palestine.

(B) They were written by *trustworthy eye-witnesses and contemporaries*. The Gospel writers affirm that they narrate only what they themselves heard and saw, or what they gathered from other trustworthy and contemporary witnesses.

The truthfulness of the Gospel writers is borne out by (1) the freshness, the directness, the artless simplicity of their narrative; (2) by the frankness with which they record their own damaging faults, even their own cowardice and treason; (3) by their self-sacrifice and zeal, even to martyrdom. Men of that type do not go to death with a fraud or a lie upon their lips; (4) by the supreme confidence with which

they appeal for corroboration of their statements to their contemporaries, and challenge contradiction. Had they been guilty of inexactitude, their many bitter enemies could have brought a cloud of first-hand witnesses to refute them; (5) the wonderful life they portray, the unique and radiant character of Christ, so different from the popular ideals of the day—had all that been an invention and not a fact, “the inventor would have been greater than the hero.”

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. The written records of the early writers of the Church, the records of the councils, and various inscriptions and monuments give a wealth of truth called *Tradition*. Can you tell why that is reliable as a whole?

2. When was the present version of the Bible translated into English, and by whom?

3. There is a symbol for each of the Evangelists. Can you give the meaning for each symbol? (See Ezechiel, I, 4-10).

4. Learn the names of the writers of the various books of the New Testament.

5. Read carefully the first two chapters of the Gospel according to St. Luke. See what evidences of historical accuracy you can find there. What insight do you there obtain into the boyhood of Christ? Was the Blessed Virgin patient?

## CHAPTER V

### A SUMMARY OF CHRIST'S CLAIMS

Now that we are sure that the record which we possess of Christ's life is accurate, we are prepared to accept His sayings and to study their real meaning. In all your education there is no more important task than this—getting acquainted with the life of Christ. Never permit yourself to imagine that your life has no connection with that of Our Lord. Christ claimed to be here in the interest of all mankind. His message was for all; hence you are included. "Christ is the contemporary of every human soul," the same as if He were born but yesterday.

In this course, we shall touch only on the more important events in the life of Christ. Much of the hiddenness of His ways and the beauty of His life will have to be left untouched. It would be a great help to study the prophecies of the Old Testament, especially that of Isaiah: "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be called Emmanuel" (*i. e.*, "God with us"), (Is. VII, 14). This prophecy took place 740 years or more before the birth of Christ, and the fact that it was fulfilled in Him throws light on His life. But we shall limit ourselves to the records found in the New Testament.



I. *Christ claimed to be more than a man.*

- (a) "Before Abraham was made, I am" (Jn. VIII, 58). (He was eternal.)
- (b) He said that He would do the works of His Father, such as raising the dead to life. He thus made Himself equal to the Father (Jn. V, 21).
- (c) He said that He would judge the world (Mt. XXV, 31-46).
- (d) He promised to give His Body and Blood as Food and Drink (Jn. VI, 51-52).

II. *Christ claimed to be the Son of God.*

- (a) He accepted Peter's confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt. XVI, 16).
- (b) He said to one whom He had healed: "Dost thou believe in the Son of God?" And the man answered: "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him," and Christ said: "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee" (Jn. IX, 35-37).
- (c) "He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also" (Jn. XIV, 9) "I and the Father are one." "The Father is in Me, and I in the Father" (Jn. X, 30 and 38). When He had said this, the Jews took up stones to stone Him, "because Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God" (Jn. X, 33).

The Jews understood that He considered Himself to be God.

- (d) He even allowed Himself to be put to death on the charge that He considered Himself the Son of God (Jn. XIX, 7).

**CHRIST** No reasonable person doubts that  
**TRUE MAN** Christ was man and a real historical  
**AND AT** Figure. So, we have one claiming to  
**THE SAME** be God, who was to all appearances a  
**TIME** man. In such a Person there must  
**TRUE GOD** have been a twofold nature (God-Man). He was not the Son of God in a merely poetical sense, or in the sense of an adopted Son. He was the Son of God and Himself God. The Jews understood perfectly that He made that claim. Small wonder that they began to view Him with amazement. What an awesome reflection—"God with us!"

What a privilege for the Jewish people—a divine Person Who was both human and divine!

**"MY** Christ was not long on earth when He  
**FATHER'S** made known His purpose—to attend  
**BUSINESS"** to "His Father's business." These are His first recorded words, spoken when He was only twelve and was thinking about His life work. A Jewish boy was considered to be "of age" when he became twelve. Christ, as a boy, was conscious of the awful burden God the Father had

placed on Him. (Are you afraid to undertake difficult tasks? What is your work in life?)

Neither did Christ leave the people in doubt as to what He meant by His Father's business. He came "to preach the kingdom of God" (Mk. I, 38). "For the Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost" (Lu. XIX, 10). Or, in the words of St. John the Baptist, "to enlighten them that sit in darkness" (Lu. I, 79). "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn. X; XII, 47). "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me" (Jn. XIV, 6). He alone could advise men how to prepare for eternity. From early morn till night cast its robe of darkness over humanity's ills, this Wonder-worker's sole thought was to "seek and save." Amid the quiet watches of the night His soul poured out petitions to the heavenly Father. Do you wonder that the people exclaimed: "Never man spake as this man"?

## THE RE- DEMP- TION

From Christ's teachings, it is apparent that the human race was not on the right way to its destiny. Sin, the sin of Adam, the sins of all generations, were keeping people from God's presence.

Christ came to make satisfaction for these sins. "The Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a redemption for many" (Mt. XX, 28). And at the Last Supper He

said that His Blood was to be "shed unto the remission of sins." Thus Redemption was Christ's great work, that is, He made it possible for men to reach God's presence. St. Peter says that we were "not redeemed with corruptible things as gold or silver, but with the precious Blood of Christ" (1 Peter I, 18).

### **APPLICA- TIONS**

1. What does the word "Incarnation" mean? How did it happen that Christ appeared among the Jews rather than among some other people?

2. Why did not the leaders of the Jews receive Christ? The Jews of today think that the Messiah has not yet come. Find texts in the Gospel of St. Matthew proving that He was the Messiah.

3. The Church has always taught the existence of original sin. Look up Romans V, 12, and see the scriptural reasons for belief in original sin.

4. What is success? What is the purpose of your being here on earth?

## CHAPTER VI

### CHRIST'S CHARACTER AS PROOF OF HIS CLAIMS

**DIVINE  
FAITH  
DOES NOT  
COME  
FROM  
HUMAN  
FAITH**

If Christ was God, and if He came from the Father, the Creator of the world, then He can explain the meaning of life to you. If He was God, then you are on the right path, because you have been following Christ. If His life was the life that is pictured in the New Testament, then you have a divine Model for imitation, and you can be sure that you are setting yourself right for eternity.

We are considering in these chapters human reasons for trusting in Christ. These reasons give you faith in Christ in a human way. For His life was "the most beautiful among the sons of men."

But the divine Faith which was given you at Baptism is something different from the faith that arises from the study of Christ's life. Divine Faith is a supernatural gift. Remember that all you learn in history is not the cause of that divine Faith which you possess. Many study history and humanly believe in Christ. You do the same. But your divine Faith is an assent given freely and solely because God grants you that gift. Faith is the sum of your beliefs.

**UNUSUAL  
CHARAC-  
TER OF  
CHRIST'S  
TEACH-  
INGS**

With the coming of Christ, the world was given a new idea of God. God was no more the hard task-master of the Old Testament, but a God of love—a kind, interested Father. Christ was the only original Man who ever lived. “He comes not like the prophets denouncing woe; He comes not like the philosophers arguing and defining; but He comes as from central depths of the Unseen, calm and gentle, wise and loving. The tranquil beauty of immortal things lies on Him and breathes in His words. God is revealed when He appears; and when He speaks, the truth and love by which souls live are made known” (5).

It is easy for you to understand that Christ's life was stainless, but deep thought is required to realize how high above all other teachings were the truths brought to earth by Christ. He said: “Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that calumniate you” (Mt. V, 44). That was a new teaching in the world of His day and it has greatly softened life.

Christ elevated the position of woman. If woman-kind is respected today, thanks should be given to Christ. For Christ showed the world that woman's sphere is to make the home a sacred fount of love, where innocence can be protected and children led to God.

Christ showed the true dignity of mankind to con-



sist in his soul. "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" (Mt. XVI, 26). Not beauty, nor wealth, nor talent, nor popularity make you worth while, but the fact that you are destined for God.

**CHRIST'S PERSONAL QUALITIES** "Which of you shall convince Me of sin?" What human leader could propose such a question to his enemies? Had there been any flaw in Christ's character, do you not think that the Jews would have passed it down to posterity? Imagine how it must have felt to be in the presence of *Infinite Sanctity*. Think of what that presence did for Mary Magdalen. Would you not have been touched by His presence?

What was Christ like? What did He do? These are the questions that appeal to young people. Did He not live the life of a boy? Did He not grow into manhood? Did He not attract attention when he spoke? Did He not astonish His hearers? Did He not meet opposition from those tied up in selfish interests?

Christ did not seek for thrills or excitement. Most of His life was spent in the quiet routine of daily toil. (Can you toil daily and keep your cheer?) It is still possible for the ordinary people to go to Him and have their life gladdened, as in His day it was said that the common people "heard Him gladly."

"He ever lived and dwelt among men, as a member

of a family and community, in constant and active intercourse with the world" (6). You see, He wished to be the very life of His followers. He was the Leader of men. "By the contemplation of His life mankind have been exalted and purified more than by the disquisitions of all philosophers and the exhortations of all moralists. He is so human that the poor and the ignorant feel at home with Him. He is so divine that the highest and the greatest minds who have lived since He was born have looked to Him as to an unapproachable ideal" (5-a).

Can you picture the trust that the leper felt when he said: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean"? You recall how Christ received the little children. It ought, then, to be worth your while to get in touch with such a Personality. In Him is your strength, and the more you desire to acquire such qualities as poise, firmness, humility, fidelity, self-sacrifice, charity, the more will you find that these qualities shone beautifully in His life and that they are there for your imitation.

**MIRACLES  
AND  
PROPH-  
ECIES**

Perhaps the first test that you would require of anyone who claimed to be God, would be that he work a miracle. Many were anxious to see Christ do so, but if you study His life, you will notice that He never worked one to satisfy curiosity. He worked miracles only for spiritual purposes, to

enable men to believe in His divinity. In this He differed from the magicians of the East.

Likewise, His prophecies referred to spiritual facts. He predicted His own death, His resurrection, and the destruction of Jerusalem. The fulfillment of these prophecies backed up His claims to divinity.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Study the Sermon on the Mount in St. Matthew, chapters V, VI, and VII.
2. What appeals to you in the idea of God becoming man?
3. Christ's enemies help us to believe in His claims. How?
4. In your conversation do you imitate Christ's kindness and willingness to forgive?
5. A certain reserve was seen in Christ's life. He was among the people, yet not of them. He never lowered Himself to their weaknesses. Can you be in the world, yet not lower yourself to its evil practices?

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RESURRECTION

#### THE BASIC FACT

*There is one miracle on which Catholicity is willing to base the truth of its claims.* It is the Resurrection of Christ. "If Christ be not

risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (I Cor. XV, 14). The Resurrection is the final, conclusive proof that Christ is God. You realize that man can do wonderful things—can ride the air and talk across continents, and, in his pride, may think himself independent; but what man is there who, when death has crept over him, can again cause the life-blood to flow through his arteries? "It is not in man's power to stop the spirit, neither hath he power in the day of death" (Eccl. VIII, 8).

If it can be proved that Christ actually died and came to life again, He certainly is God, and His life was the life of a God-man,—His words, the very words of the Creator of the world.

(a) *Christ foretold His Resurrection.* "And on the third day He shall rise again" (Mt. XX, 19). The Jews asked for a guard over His tomb: "Sir, we have remembered that this seducer said while He was yet

alive: 'After three days I will rise again.' Command, therefore, the sepulchre to be guarded" (Mt. XXVII, 63). So the Jews were acquainted with Christ's prophecy.

(b) *Christ was really Dead.* His death was officially reported to Pilate. Roman soldiers dared make no mistake in such matters. The pain and the loss of blood would have caused His death. Blood and water issuing from His side were a certain sign of death. All the Evangelists agree that He was really dead. Might we not trust them rather than modern skeptics who do not want to believe?

(c) *Skeptical Witnesses of the Resurrection were Many and Crafty.* His own friends were slow to accept the Resurrection at first. And do not think that people were easily fooled. A harder class to convince than the Pharisees never existed. Would they not have discredited any talk about the Resurrection if it had not been based on fact? They could not deny the fact, so they attempted to prevent its knowledge from spreading. Think of the great advantage it would have been to them had they been able to show that the Resurrection was a dream, or a fake. But they simply could not deny the fact.

(d) *Honest Evidence.* "And He was seen by Cephas, and after that by the eleven. Then He was seen by more than five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. XV, 5). The character of these witnesses does not permit us to conclude that they invented this

story of the Resurrection to fool the world. They would have been too clumsy for that; and what could they have gained by a false story? Their lives were an eloquent testimony to the truth of their statements. The foolish efforts of the Synagogue to hide the fact of the Resurrection [hush-money was given to the guards (Mt. XXVIII, 12-14),] only make the truth stand out more strongly. Can you imagine such a wonderful structure as the early Church being built on a lie?

(e) *Sound Evidence.* The Apostles were not "seeing things." The vision they beheld was the real Christ. "See my hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; handle and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see Me to have" (Lu. XXIV, 39).

You will note that ordinary visions do not last long, but Christ's appearances sometimes extended over a considerable period of time. Neither were the Apostles in that state of mind in which men want a thing so intensely that they imagine they have it or see it. Frequently Christ remarked how slow the Apostles were to believe, and before the Resurrection they certainly were not in an expectant mood. Now, how can you account for this change in hard-headed and slow-thinking men—a change to a belief in the Resurrection—unless the Resurrection be a fact?

The irrefutable evidence was before them, and having been enlightened from above, *they preached the*



*Resurrection in the very city where it had taken place, and before the people who had crucified Christ.* Why were they not refuted? Could all of this have been fraud or self-deception? No wonder Gamaliel was forced to say: "If this council or this work be of men, it will come to naught, but if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it" (Acts V, 38).

The Resurrection is, then, the capstone of Christ's life and works. It is the one magnificent, convincing voice of history crying out for belief in Him. It is the best assurance to you that you are on the right track in religious belief; it can give you strength and courage to face a hostile world and to argue for a more general belief in the divinity of Christ.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. What is meant by the divinity of Christ? How would you attempt to prove the divinity to a pagan who had never heard of it?
2. To become familiar with the facts of the Resurrection, read Luke XXIV. Then look up the article on the "Resurrection" in the Catholic Encyclopedia.
3. Study the first few verses in chapter III of St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians.
4. What does St. Paul say about our resurrection in the fifteenth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians?
5. Christ's Resurrection and Ascension have raised

our thoughts to that immortal life beyond the grave. We are thus enabled to live in a secure hope. But this very security confounds those who place their entire trust in life here on earth. Look up Philippians I, 29, and 2 Timothy III, 12, in order to see what your belief in Christ will require of you.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OUR LEADER

#### A SOLID BASIS

Most of our time in this course will be given to the application of Christ's principles to the lives of students. It is well, then, that we make sure of our foundation. We studied Christ's claims; we examined the deeds that He accomplished in proof of His assertions. We found that even a brief study ought to convince normal inquirers that He was more than man. His teachings were such as could not have been originated by a human mind. The Resurrection shows Him to the world as a God-Man. Now the question is: "Do you not think that there is enough in Christ's life to win your utmost confidence?" Who has done more for you? Who can offer more to you?

#### WHAT WE OWE TO CHRIST

If Christ proved His claims, then we must accept the message that He brought. In other words, *He is our Leader, and we owe Him allegiance.*

To Him we owe the only real answer that has ever been given to the "why," the "what," and the "whither" of our existence. To Him we owe our

right views on how to live; to Him we owe our chance to get into an eternity of bliss when we shall have "shuffled off this mortal coil." To Him we owe our knowledge of God and of our relations to God; to Him we owe the gift of our divine Faith; to Him we owe the Mass, which is a renewal of Calvary and a means of worshipping God. To Him we owe the idea and the fact of the Eucharist as spiritual Food.

You realize what an effort it was for Christ, humanly speaking, to live upon earth among unappreciative followers, to endure contempt and insult, to go through the agony of the Passion and the ignominy of the Cross. He did not do that for show; He did it for you. He hoped to draw all people to Him; you are not too young to grasp the wonderful self-sacrifice of Christ. He was human as well as divine; He could feel the sting of suffering. It will be a great day for you when you learn to appreciate what His life really means to you. He intended that people should spend some time in thinking over what He did for all. He does not force anyone, but He says: "COME"; He says: "Abide in Me."

#### **ADVANTAGES OF HIS LEADERSHIP**

Students need in their lives the influence of a strong personality. Christ supplies that need. He alone can penetrate your inmost thoughts and explain them to you; He alone can

draw out all that is best in you. Others may try to lead and influence you along certain lines, but they may not always be able to do it for your own benefit. No matter what profession or state of life you choose, He can be your guide. He alone can show you how to balance the claims of time and eternity. Other heroes may turn out to be unlike your dreams of them; but Christ will always prove more worthy of confidence, the better you know Him. Young persons love a leader with a sense of fair play, one who never takes unfair advantage. Christ is your safest reliance for fair play, not only here, but hereafter. The important point is that only through Christ can you reach God.

Read history and learn how Christ has stirred the hearts of men—how He became an inspiration for the brush and the pen, for the soldier and the explorer, for the saint and the workman, for the statesman as well as for the humble nun. Study His influence on St. Paul, on St. Francis of Assisi, on St. Ignatius of Loyola, on St. Catherine of Siena, or on St. Teresa (the "Little Flower"). Think of the thousands of young men and women who have given up attractive positions in the world in order to labor for Christ; think of the parents who found guidance and strength in Him. During a retreat, Daniel O'Connell, the great Irishman, wrote this resolution into his rule of life: "To begin every day with an unlimited offering of myself totally to my crucified Redeemer, and to con-

jure Him by all His infinite merits and divine charity to take me under His direction and control in all things" (7).

Do not think that Christ is too far above you. He took human form in order that He might be accessible to all, in order to demonstrate in human form the qualities of God. He is, then, your spiritual hero. If you so wish, He can bring you out of laziness, can make you conquer self, can help you develop into a strong character. When you feel that others misunderstand you, remember that He is waiting for you. "It is in fact remarkable that some of the sublimest virtues seem more imitable in Jesus than in some of His servants, though far superior to them." There is a balance of qualities in Christ. He is not one-sided; no fault clouds His qualities.

## **FAITH IN CHRIST**

Christ had enemies on earth, and there are still "enemies of the Cross of Christ." You know that a man who is doing great work for a community will always be opposed by those who are seeking their own selfish ends. Now the devil appears to take particular satisfaction in destroying faith in Christ, in weaning people away from Christ. So, be not surprised if there come into your life a test of your loyalty to Christ. No one can tell under what form, or by what sort of person this test will come. It is different in different lives; but, *WATCH IT!*



Some people seek to explain Christ and Catholicity on merely natural grounds, but, as a convert recently wrote: "If Christ were a myth, who *could have invented such a character*—so stainless, so harmonious, so superhuman. And those marvelous words of His, which have transformed the world, *Who was the author of them, if not Jesus?* Could ignorant Galilean fishermen have attained to such supreme distinction? But if not they, who was the unknown genius that conceived that unexampled life and published for all times such matchless utterances? Why have we not some record of the author of this deathless narrative? It is because there is no other author than Jesus Himself" (4-a).

Attachment to Christ is not a mere matter of study. Prayer and reflection must always be the companions of the book. Then you will soon learn what it is to feel personal loyalty to Christ. No matter where you live, no matter what your daily occupations are, this friendship with Christ can still be kept up without interfering with your other duties.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Read "No Handicap," by M. Taggart, and note the sense of loyalty in the character, "Peter." Then read "Paul, Hero, and Saint" by Fink, and the "Life of Father Stanton," by Kane.

2. Who is the outstanding historical character that recurs most frequently to your imagination? Should

it not be Christ? What process would you have to go through in order that the thought of Christ recur to you frequently?

3. In the Epistle to the Romans look up the thirty-fifth and thirty-ninth verses of chapter eight and discuss their meaning.

4. Write your interpretation of the following thought attributed to Cardinal Newman: "Without an intimate apprehension of the personal character of Our Saviour, what professes to be faith is little more than an act of ratiocination. If faith is to live, it must love; it must lovingly live in the Author of faith as a true and living being" (8).

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PLAN OF OUR LEADER

#### WHAT CHRIST WOULD NATUR- ALLY DO TO SPREAD HIS PRIN- CIPLES

Christ was interested in all men. He called all men to enter His Kingdom, which meant to live by His life and Revelation. He wished His doctrines to be preached everywhere. He could hardly expect this to be done in the life-time of the Apostles; so, what arrangements would you expect Him to make for establishing His leadership over all mankind?

Naturally, He would establish an organization to carry on His work. The following is the opinion of an able lawyer, who was once governor of California: "If we concede that Christ was a lawgiver, then we must concede *that He would necessarily organize His followers into a visible association. . . .* When a just legislator founds a system, he always has in his eye the adaptation of his government to the condition of the men united. And if Christ made a law to be practically obeyed by men on earth, *He must have instituted a government here*, and this government could not exist without a visible organization of the parties

governed. . . . Assuming that Christ was a Lawgiver, the organization of the visible Church must logically follow from that character" (9).

**GOOD  
REASONS  
FOR AN  
ORGANI-  
ZATION**

(a) A visible organization, spreading among men the truths that Christ brought, would be the means best adapted to man's nature. The average man would prefer to have divine truths brought to him through a certified agency, rather than rely on fancied visions of enlightenment from God, or mere interior illumination. Normal men are a little skeptical of dreams and visions that have nothing to back them up but the words of one claiming to have received them from Heaven. History shows that thousands of fakers have attempted to force their dreams on men. A visible organization is safer. Where there is an organization that can trace its origin back to Christ, the members are not dependent on some fanatic who might wish to set up his own leadership.

(b) The nature of the Revelations that Christ brought made necessary their interpretation before men could understand them. Christ had divine truths to hand over to the human race—truths hard to understand, truths not obtainable by human reasoning, truths easily mixed up, confused, and misinterpreted. It would seem reasonable to conclude that Christ would arrange for some means of guarding and interpreting

these truths. The United States was careful to set up the Supreme Court to guard and interpret the Constitution. No citizen is allowed to interpret the Constitution as he wishes. Do you not think that Christ would arrange for a spiritual "Supreme Court" to interpret the truths that He had brought, the deposit of Faith? Since human beings have immortal souls, since there is a Heaven and a hell, a great deal depends on the correct interpretation and following of Christ's commands. There is needed some organization to present correctly these commands to all future generations. It cannot be urged that the enlightenment which He promised to some of His followers would do away with the necessity of interpreters of His doctrines, because in His own lifetime He actually relied on these special followers to enlighten others and to direct them. He did not command all to teach, but just a few.

**THE  
METHOD  
TO BE EM-  
PLOYED  
BY THOSE  
WHO  
SPREAD  
HIS  
IDEALS**

(a) Christ appeared among men in human form. He chose men for His followers. He lived, spoke, and ate among the people. He employed the human touch; His deeds inflamed the imagination of His followers; His language was intelligible to all. It seems reasonable, therefore, to suppose that He would want the same method employed by those whom He

would choose to teach His Gospel. If He intended personally to enlighten all men, without any human agencies, why did He appear in human form among men? People were to hear of Him through those who were authorized to represent Him visibly.

(b) Indeed, even in His own lifetime He sent His followers among men, to heal them, to teach them, to give them the truth. They were to do this with His authority, and He was to protect them. This meant visible contact; this meant representatives who were officially sent.

(c) He nowhere mentions that His ideals were to be spread by means of a book. He foresaw false followers in His own fold and in the future fold, but He gave no hint as to the necessity of a Bible. He wrote nothing Himself, although the Jews of His day relied on written works. He did not command His followers to write anything. But He did command them to teach, to sanctify, to govern, to save.

You see how weak is the argument that His religion can be found in a book, or in the interior illumination of each individual, or that a visible, external organization is not necessary. It took a visible organization to separate the true from the false writings about Christ in the early centuries. The Christian world for the most part accepts that selection of books; why not also accept the visible organization that made the selection?



(d) Christ nowhere gave the impression that "it matters little what a man believes, so long as he acts decently." On the contrary, He laid great stress on belief: "He that believeth not, shall be condemned" (Mark, XVI, 16). "O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I suffer you?" (Mt. XVII, 16). "O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken" (Lu. XXIV, 25).

(e) He made no attempt to outline His organization in all its details. Many points of doctrine were to be brought out more clearly as time went on: "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will teach you all truth" (Jn. XVI, 12). His plan was to be developed and made clear gradually. This would seem to imply that He wished to rely on an external organization, which would receive the enlightenment and present it to the people.

**"FOLLOW ME"**      The plan of Our Lord was to gather all men under His banner, into His Kingdom; young and old were to be included among His followers. And we may not doubt that, having selected special followers while He was here on earth, He would also expect to have leaders in His future organization. These men, under His guidance, would lead the people to Him. In fol-

lowing Him, the people were to be directed by those whom He had chosen, and later, by others properly chosen.

## **APPLICA- TIONS**

1. Whom would you expect to be the best interpreters of what Christ wanted done, the Apostles or present-day theorists?

2. Why is it unsafe to follow leaders who put their own interpretation on life, on the soul, and on Christ Himself?

3. You have seen many who go to fortune-tellers, you have heard of those who wished to learn the future and visited mediums, or who, through mediums, imagined they were in touch with departed relatives. Does not this show the necessity and value of a Church to interpret correctly Christ's wishes? A good Catholic never troubles himself about mediums, since the Church interprets God to him.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CHURCH

#### **WHAT CHRIST ACTU- ALLY DID**

Christ Himself, while here on earth, actually laid the foundations of that organization which we know as the Catholic Church. He wanted His truths to be preached to all men, to

be interpreted, and to be preserved; therefore,

(a) He picked twelve men to be His special followers.

(b) He selected St. Peter to be the chief of the twelve, and He promised to build His organization on Peter: "*Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church*, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (Mt. XVI, 18 sq.).

What would you conclude from those words? That Christ wished only an invisible, mystical organization? Hardly. If the head of a business concern were to say to you: "I am going to make you my manager. I will build my business around you. Whatever contracts you make will be approved by me

(power of binding). You have full power (that is what is meant by the power of the keys)," would you not call that picking out one man from among others and making him boss, giving him power to run the business, and to run it with full authority? That is what Christ did to Peter. If Christ did not want a Pope, if He did not want a visible Church, why did He use those words?

(c) Christ intended this organization, the Church, to speak with authority, with judicial power, with a sanction behind her decrees. That is seen from the quotation above and from the following: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me" (Lu. X, 16).

This shows that Christ had in mind an organization that could lay down a rule for its followers to observe.

(d) In a touching scene, just before His Ascension, Christ fulfilled the promise that He had made to Peter. He was about to leave His Apostles. Naturally He was thinking over the future, over the prospect of spreading His truths. How was the work to go on? Certainly His words now were full of meaning. Three times He asked Peter if he loved His Master, and three times Peter poured out his heart in protestations of love: "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." Indeed Christ knew that he did, and He then conferred upon Peter the terrible responsibility contained in those words: "Feed My Lambs; Feed My Sheep" (Jn. XXI, 15; 17). The sheep

were not to perish; they were to have another visible leader.

You have heard of the helplessness of sheep. What would they be without a shepherd? Now, in solving the big problems of life, people are somewhat like sheep—they need a leader. Thousands try to lead people here and there. Look up the number of organizations promising happiness to their members. Must not Christ have had a concern for the people of to-day? Did He not foresee the dangers of being given poisonous food? Hence, the need of someone to dispense solid food, true doctrine, correct interpretation of life.

We Catholics believe that Christ there conferred on St. Peter the primacy of honor and of jurisdiction—power to interpret life. “Peter was made the common shepherd of the whole collective flock.” The Holy Ghost would enlighten and direct Peter, so that Peter might do the same for the people.

If Christ had not made this provision for a leader in His flock, would not people now consider Him to have been unwise? The same men who deny the correctness of the organization of the Catholic Church would be the first to attack Christ if He had failed to provide means of securing unity in His Church, or of speaking with authority. Those who pray for the truth usually come to believe in this arrangement.

(e) Just before the Ascension, Christ also gave to all the Apostles the commission to spread His truths

everywhere: "And Jesus coming to them [the eleven] said: 'All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world'" (Mt. XXVIII, 18). These words, remember, were not spoken to all of Christ's followers, but just to the leaders. You recall that Christ had representatives during His lifetime. He was to have the same afterwards. It was to these same leaders that He had said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (Jn. XX, 23), and: "Do this (offer sacrifice) for a commemoration of Me" (Lu. XXII, 19).

The Apostles did not found the Church, nor did St. Paul. Christ Himself established the Church, the organization of His followers under one visible head. Development did come in the Church, but always along the lines laid down by Christ. The Church was Our Lord's idea of reaching the people of all times, holding them together and feeding them the same spiritual food. It will be interesting to watch how that idea of Our Lord's took hold on the world. The Church is, in fact, Christ Himself, continuing through the centuries the work He began on earth.



**APPLICA-  
TIONS**

1. Look up Matthew XVI, 18, where the Evangelist tells of Christ choosing Peter as the head of His Church, and then imagine the blindness of a man who said recently that "Christ organized no institution; established no hierarchy." In your games you follow an authority on rules. What advantages do you possess in having a divinely-commissioned Church to give you Christ's rules for the game of life?

2. If the idea that Christ did not start the Church, or want a Church, were not right, then what other schemes could be right? When one person starts to do something, have you ever noticed how others will refuse to work with him for the simple reason that the idea behind the plan is not their own? Likewise, some would think the idea of the Church to be all right if it were their own.

3. How is the Church a spiritual mother to you?

## CHAPTER XI

### THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

The Apostles were simple and honest men. We would naturally expect them to be loyal to the ideas of Christ. In the next few lessons we are going to see how the Apostles, and the men chosen by them, took hold of the plans begun by their Master, and, under the guidance of the promised Paraclete, shaped the organization which we know as the Catholic Church.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES will give us the history of this first group of Christians. For the present, dismiss from your mind the organization of the Church as it is today. Return in spirit to the time when Peter, James, John, Andrew, and the others find themselves without the visible presence of their Master. Depressed they are at first, but after the descent of the Holy Ghost there is a marvelous loyalty to Christ. Filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, guided by Christ's wishes, mindful of His warnings and cheered by the words of His blessed Mother, they stand forth against a hostile world. What a picture they make, those eleven common men setting out to conquer the world for their Master.

(Do you not think that Mary had some influence over them? She had passed through her rôle of suffering, and she could now strengthen them in their trials.) Humanly weak, but divinely strong, this little band makes up the nucleus of the Apostolic Church. They certainly knew what Christ wanted; they were acquainted with the method that Christ had planned. Slow, indeed, they were to cast off the old ideas, for a devout Jew loved his religion; but at the same time the following points are clear:

**(A) A RECOGNIZED LEADER** St. Peter stands out as chief of the group. He worked the first miracle (Acts III); he received the first converts into the Church (XI, 1-18); he inflicted the first ecclesiastical penalty (V); he made the first dogmatic decision (XV, 7). In this book—the Acts of the Apostles—the name of Peter is mentioned over fifty times; while the next name after his is mentioned only eight times. It is thus easy to see that the Apostles recognized that Peter had been chosen as chief by Christ Himself. St. Paul had a little dispute with St. Peter on one occasion (Gal. II, 11), but it was only over a policy to be followed; it had nothing to do with doctrine. In another place, St. Paul acknowledged that he had gone to Jerusalem to see Peter (Gal. I, 18). Four times the list of the Apostles is mentioned in the New Testament, and always the name of Peter is placed first (Judas last).

**(B) THE  
PEOPLE  
RECOG-  
NIZED  
THE AU-  
THORITY  
OF THE  
APOSTLES**

It is an easy matter to show that the people accepted the Apostles as leaders, for the Acts say that "they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles and in the communication of the breaking of Bread and in prayers" (II, 42). Again, the people brought in what they had and "laid it down at the feet of the Apostles" (IV, 35).

We see here that the people believed, prayed, and received the Sacrament. Does that not sound natural? And it all took place about the year 35 A. D.

**(C) THE  
APOS-  
TOLIC  
CHURCH  
WAS A  
VISIBLE  
UNION**

The fact that Christ intended a visible organization among His followers is made more certain by the action of the Apostles in continuing an external method of spreading His principles. It is unreasonable to imagine that they began a Church that Christ never intended, or developed it in a

way that Christ would not have wished. Those men were not working for selfish motives; love urged them; the love of Christ held them together.

St. Peter went to Rome after he had labored for a few years in Asia Minor. We are sure that he established the Papacy at Rome. Other Apostles journeyed to other lands. Later St. Peter returned to Jerusalem, and we know that a council was held and

that he presided (Acts XV, 6 sq.). This took place about twenty years after the Resurrection of Christ.

It is true that the Holy Ghost directly enlightened many in those days. Miraculous gifts were frequently in evidence, and since the meetings were not always public, the external organization does not always come to the front strongly, but we can see that it always existed.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Read "Fabiola," by Cardinal Wiseman.

2. One writer says that the preaching of the Apostles and their disciples made a vivid impression, because they gave notice of a new kingdom and a new ruler for the "yet unconquered province of the human heart" (10). Would you say that the same opportunity is open to Christ's followers today? Are not men's hearts open for the truths that Christ brought?

3. Read the sixth and seventh chapters of the Acts. Write papers on the qualities shown by St. Stephen.

4. Look up Acts VIII, 16-18, for the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Who administered it? Who received it? What were its effects?

## CHAPTER XII

### CONTINUING THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

#### FIRST

#### CENTURY

The last lesson has shown us that the early Christians acted as members of a visible society, with the Apostles as leaders, and that they tried to remain loyal to the teachings of Christ.

Within forty years after Christ's Ascension, most of the Apostles must have gone down the glorious road of martyrdom. Our interest now centers on those who preached the Cross of Christ after them. We know that Christ had many faithful followers, but history has rightfully given pre-eminence to one man, perhaps the greatest who ever followed Our Lord. He was great in the degree to which he grasped the doctrines of Christ, and great in the victories he won by virtue of those principles. I mean St. Paul, the man who said: "To me to live is Christ," and who originated the phrase, "put on Christ."

It is no trouble to pick out in the first century those who were won over by the Cross and who were brave enough to follow Christ. The group, derisively called "Christians," were already conspicuous in Rome, Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, and Alexandria for the following traits:



(a) *An intense attachment to Christ*, as seen in St. Paul and in the martyrs.

(b) *A total change of life, resulting from their acceptance of the spirit of Christ's doctrines.* "How these Christians love one another," said the Romans. Contrast this with the Roman hatred of the period.

(c) *A very apparent leadership.* Listen to Clement, who was Pope from 90 to 99 A. D., under the cruel Emperor Domitian. Clement wrote a letter to the Corinthians in Greece, addressed: "The Church of God sojourning in Rome to the Church of God sojourning in Corinth." You can thus see how the Christians of the first century were organized and known to one another, though separated by custom, government, and vast distances. The Pope chides the Corinthians in regard to some trouble that they had over a bishop and presbyters. He pleads with them to be submissive, as Peter and Paul had been submissive. Then he shows us how the early Christians looked upon their Church: "The Apostles were taught the Gospel for our sakes at the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was sent from God, and the Apostles from Christ. Both therefore issued from the will of God with due order. . . . And so they preached in the country and in the towns; they proved by the Spirit the first fruits [converts] of their work in each place, and appointed them to be bishops and deacons among them that should believe" (10-a).

Evidently the Corinthians were not at peace with those who had been placed over them; hence Clement reminds them that the Apostles themselves had arranged for these successors. "No less did our Apostles know through Our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife over the dignity of the bishop's office. . . . They appointed the said deacons and bishops and ordained that at their death their ministry should pass into the hands of other tried men. It is an act of injustice to thrust out of the ministry men who, with the good will of the entire Church, received their position at the hands of the Apostles, or of other honored men at a later time" (10-b).

Clement was in Rome and was speaking to a different race, who despised the Romans. Unless Christ had intended to have a Pope with supreme authority in religious matters, how could Clement have usurped such power and such an office *while the Apostle St. John was still alive?* Would the Christians have allowed such usurpation? Indeed not. They listened to Clement because they knew that he had been lawfully chosen as the third successor of St. Peter. His argument, that the ministry comes from Christ and the Apostles and must be obeyed, shows that even in Greece they could trace the origin of each minister back to Christ, just as each priest today can trace his authority back to the same source. For years, the Corinthians read the letter of Clement side by side with the

Scriptures. So you can see how the Pope was recognized even in the first century.

Towards the end of the first century there are two other names that impress us—St. Ignatius of Antioch and St. Polycarp of Smyrna. Both of these men probably knew St. John. St. Polycarp came to Rome from the far-distant East and sought a settlement with regard to the time when Easter should be observed. Though the question was not settled (it was not a point of doctrine), yet his presence in Rome brought many converts. We have the letters of both of these men, and they tell us much.

**CHRIS-** In 1883, there came to light an old  
**TIAN** book which is called *Didache* (Doc-  
**PRACTICE** trine of the Twelve Apostles). It  
 was most likely written before the  
 year 100. It mentions Baptism and the Sacrifice of  
 the Mass, and says that bishops and priests ought to be  
 ordained for this sacrifice; and it also speaks of the  
 confession of sins. We can thus see how the Church  
 was practicing the same things that she practices to-  
 day. One writer of those days says: "On every day  
 of the Lord [Sunday], after assembling, *break bread*  
*and give thanks* [offer the divine Sacrifice] after you  
 have confessed your sins, that your sacrifice may be  
 pure." Confession was made before Mass because  
 everyone received Holy Communion.

**SECOND  
CENTURY**

The mustard seed had begun to grow. Christians were everywhere, and they were directed by leaders corresponding to our bishops. St. Ignatius was perhaps still alive at the beginning of this century, and he distinctly states the existence and work of a bishop. St. Irenæus says that the Faith had spread into Germany, Spain, France, the Orient, Egypt, etc. Irenæus was a young priest of Lyons, France (not far from the scene of Cæsar's first battles). Later he became bishop, and having some trouble about the celebration of Easter, went to Rome and appealed to the Pope to settle the matter. We have here a silent recognition of the Pope's power.

About 177 A. D., a Roman Emperor, Aurelius, sent orders to Lyons to persecute the Christians, and this is what the martyrs in that city said: "The servants of Christ who sojourn in Vienna and Lugdunum (Lyons) to the brethren throughout Asia and Phrygia *who hold the same faith and hope* with us of redemption—peace and glory from God the Father and Jesus Christ" (10-c). Think of the strong bond of unity that was necessary thus to unite those widely separated Christians. The description which we have of the sufferings of the martyrs of Lyons is a testimony of their charity. In place of thinking of themselves, they tried to console and encourage others.

These martyrs were far removed from Jerusalem, from Rome, from the Asiatics to whom the letter is ad-

dressed, yet they easily recognized that all Christians were one. To understand the full significance of this, remember that ideas could spread but slowly in those days. The religion of the Christians, the Catholic religion of the second century, had no legal right to exist; yet the name of Christ had been carried to all corners of the Roman Empire.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. St. Paul told the Romans to "put on Christ" (Rom. XIII, 14). What do you think he meant by this? What did the Romans do?

2. If you intend to follow Christ, should there be a change in your manner of living? Should this change be noticeable?

3. The early Catholics were examples of "souls surrendered to the attraction of the Divine." Show how this caused conversions, especially from pagan worship of the body.

4. Look up the life of St. Justin Martyr (Catholic Encyclopedia). He had been a pagan. Find out what brought him into the Catholic Church.

5. Study the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Why did Christ choose St. Paul? Did St. Paul co-operate? Did he suffer for Christ? Look up his life aim in Philippians I, 21 and III, 8, 10, 13. Then go to the second Epistle to Timothy, IV, 7 and 8, to see how St. Paul kept the Faith.

## CHAPTER XIII

### PRESERVING CHRIST'S ORIGINAL OUTLINE

**THIRD CENTURY** In the beginning of the third century, Tertullian, a Christian, used these words to the Roman Senate: "We are but of yesterday, and we fill your cities, your islands, your castles, your councils, and camps, the senate and your royal palaces." The "we" refers to the Christians, the followers of the lowly Nazarene.

For nearly two centuries, there had been Christians in the world. *Had they maintained their original views?* Had this spreading out over the empire caused them to adopt different doctrines? No. Christ was still the center of their lives. Martyrs still went to death with a smile on their lips (*e. g.*, St. Cecilia, who was of a noble family, and St. Agatha). The poor were still cherished. St. Lawrence was ordered to bring out all the treasures of the Church and he gathered together all the poor and presented them to the rulers—the poor were the treasures of the Christian Church.

The followers of Christ were still hated for His Name's sake. But the hatred did not cause them to forego their works of zeal in behalf of truth. The



Emperor Severus (222-235) placed a portrait of Christ in his private chapel and commended the concord and prudence of the Christian bishops to his generals and magistrates as models for their imitation (10-d).

Naturally there were some renegade Christians. After periods of peace, it would be found that many had become lax and would not endure persecution; but Christian life in general was strong.

### THE ATTITUDE TAKEN BY THIRD CENTURY CHRISTIANS

“The Catholic Church was not (in the third century) an opinion, or a fashion, or a philosophy; it was not a theory or a habit; it was a clearly defined body corporate, based on numerous exact doctrines, extremely jealous of its unity and of its precise definitions, and filled, as was no other body of men at that time, *with passionate conviction* (11). The evidence shows that the Church “was already a highly disciplined, powerful, growing body, intent upon unity, ruled by bishops, having for its central doctrine the Incarnation of God in an historical Person, Jesus Christ, and for its central rite a Mystery, the transformation of bread and wine by priests into the Body and Blood which the faithful consumed” (11-a).

This attitude in the third century was made possible by the beautiful tradition, that had come down from the Apostles, not to change the doctrines of Christ to suit

the times, but to cling to the meaning that Christ had attached to His words. The intensity of this feeling can be judged from St. Paul's admonition. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a Gospel to you, besides that which we have preached to you, *let him be anathema*" (*i. e.*, excommunicated) (Gal. I, 8).

The care shown by St. Paul became a tradition among the Christians. The principle of not changing Christ's laws was a great help because the Christians were scattered over many lands. It required long years to form methods of preserving the doctrines from those who would corrupt them. Moreover, different customs in different lands gave rise to different ways of holding services. But the point is that, despite these differences, the true Christians succeeded in maintaining Christ's teachings.

Would it not be crude to accuse martyrs of bringing in doctrines that Christ had not intended? Individuals here and there undoubtedly would misrepresent Christ, but the great body of Christians had too much respect for Christ to tamper with what He had given them.

### THE PER- SECU- TIONS

You know of the horrible sufferings of the martyred Christians. In our day, bigotry shows its face every so often; yet, it plays today, as it played then, a losing game, because the lives of the Christians gradually win over fair-minded people. The

fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth great persecutions kept the blood of Christian martyrs flowing in the third century. Emperors of this century, such as Decius and Valerian, put all the power of the Roman Empire into their effort to wipe out Christianity. Of the first thirty-one Popes all were martyrs, except one.

Down in Carthage (Africa), Cyprian was a famous bishop. He was imprisoned in 257, held for over a year, and then accused of being the leader "of persons of sacrilegious views," and was executed by the sword. This is a sample of the way many met death. The persecutions did not always rage with the same fury, but they were horribly cruel, widespread over the Roman Empire, and they endured for centuries. The more fiendish they became, the more noble the Christians grew.

## **INTEL- LECTUAL BATTLES**

Christian "apologists" is the name given to those who wrote and died in the name of Christ and for Christ.

They were numerous everywhere.

The name of Origen illuminates the third century and all of Africa. There was a famous school at Alexandria, where the Christians trained themselves to explain Christianity. Real learning abounded there.

Toward the end of the third century, the Manicheans, a new religious sect, appeared in the Roman Empire. It seems they selected all they could from the old religions and then turned their attack on Chris-

tianity. These heretics even drew Augustine to their side for a while. And they worked certain Christian truths into their system, but they are remembered chiefly for attempting to band all other religions together against the Church. It was the final effort of paganism to withstand the truth of Christ.

Despite the wide diffusion of Christianity and the cruel persecutions to which it was subjected, the Popes successfully guided, through troubled waters, the bark that Peter had launched. Throughout it all, and notwithstanding certain cases of disagreement, it is interesting to see how those people of the third century turned toward Rome and often went there to ascertain what was being taught there. Christ's outlines were preserved intact.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Read "Callista" by Cardinal Newman.
2. The persecution under Decius took place in the third century (250). The cruel Emperor planned to put all bishops to death. This shows that the office of bishop was widely known and recognized by the enemies of the Church. If such an office had been created by man in an earlier century, would not the change have been discovered by the enemies of the Church?

3. Look up the circumstances connected with the martyrdom of St. Cecilia in Rome, St. Irenæus in

Gaul, St. Agatha, St. Lawrence the deacon, and St. Denis, Bishop of Paris.

4. Look up John XIV, 26; and XVI, 13, and note what it was that guided the early Church and enabled her to preserve the Faith of Christ.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE VICTORIES OF THE CHURCH IN THE FOURTH CENTURY

**OVER PA-      You are aware that Christian doc-**  
**GANISM      trines and practices were quite oppo-**  
                 site to pagan corruptions. The lives  
of the Christians had been elevated by what they be-  
lieved and practiced. The hatred borne against them  
because of this new form of living is seen in the motto:  
*"Deleatur nomen Christianorum"* ("Let the name of  
the Christians be wiped out"). History shows us  
how, from time to time, cruel emperors, inhuman of-  
ficials, and brutish mobs, exerted themselves to the  
utmost to prevent Catholicity from taking a hold in  
the Empire. From 33 to 313, the battle went on, de-  
spite every form of human and diabolical odds. The  
Christians had thought to do good, but they were jeered  
at as corrupters of Roman greatness. They were  
kind to all, and yet, their very kindness enraged those  
steeped in vice and bigotry.

Constantine's Edict of 313 brought a change. The  
Emperor himself became a Christian. Great indeed  
must have been the relief of the Christians to find  
themselves at last victorious over paganism. The  
world still admires the struggles that had gone on, with



short periods of peace, for 280 years. To continue under such a long strain shows a fine loyalty to Christ. You see that loyalty illustrated in such men as St. Athanasius and St. John Chrysostom of the fourth century, and in St. Agnes, virgin and martyr. She was very beautiful, and one of the highest officials wished to have her as his wife; but she had chosen to be a spouse of Christ. When she was placed on a funeral pile, the flames would not touch her, and so she was beheaded, although only a girl of fifteen. (Those of high school age are, indeed, capable of "putting on Christ.")

The Christians had done more than endure persecution; they had all the while been contributing much to the lives of the people. "Christianity sanctified each individual, in as much as it taught him to live and die for Christ. It sanctified the family because it thoroughly penetrated family life, and filled it with the aroma of piety and devotion. It sanctified the married couple, the children, the household, by binding them together in true mutual love; thereby, little by little, all society was transformed from within, filled with hitherto unsuspected ideas and fitted out with new strength and capacity. The Church was the herald and the intermediary of a superior morality and culture; she gave back to the slave the dignity of man; she ennobled daily toil, hitherto so despised; she called the poor and humble to the side of the rich and noble, and designated them as the equals of the latter; she

taught men how to despise at once the advantages of life and the terrors of death. Through her, humility, continency, and chastity became honorable things. She created new men and filled them with new life, made them conscientious citizens, characters truly noble and great in every walk of life. In all of these she formed the Christian ideal and went on forever finishing and perfecting it. In the midst of ancient society she opened up an ever-flowing fountain of consolation and spiritual elevation for all the oppressed and unfortunate. Very truly indeed she renovated the face of the world" (10-e).

Only a few years before Constantine's Edict, Diocletian, after a horrible persecution, had a medal struck, to commemorate his work, with this legend: "Emperor Diocletian destroyed the Christian name." How blind is bigotry! In their worship of the body, many pagans had been blinded to the beauties of Christianity. They were blind likewise to Christianity's benefits to the Roman state. And Diocletian was blind to the uselessness of his efforts. Of course, it is not claimed that every Christian worked out the plan of Christ. Christians could lead scandalous lives as well as pagans, but in those days the general workings of Christ's religion were marvelous.

## **OVER HERESY**

Christ had predicted that the world would hate His followers, but He also said: "Beware of false prophets,

who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly are ravening wolves." And so it was to be. The enemies from within the Church were to cause the most heart-rending trouble. These were the heretics, men who preferred their own interpretation of Christ's truths to that of His Church. Certain leaders would, from time to time, break away from the general body of Christians. Thus a certain Arius in the beginning of the fourth century preached that Christ was not divine but was inferior to God, and this started the great heresy of Arianism, which shook the world for centuries. A large number of bishops gathered at Nicæa, in 325, under the direction of Pope Sylvester I and the protection of Constantine, condemned this heresy, and clearly defined the Church's teaching in regard to the divinity of Christ. You see, to protect the truth, the Church had to be exact; those who loved to quarrel over the meaning of words forced the Church to define her Creed with precision.

There had always been heretics, even in St. Paul's day. Frequently they were learned men; often they possessed qualities of mind that attract people. But pride and worldliness were a detriment to their receiving the graces necessary to believe the whole body of Christian truths. It requires a certain amount of humility to be a Catholic. In matters of revealed truth or doctrine, we do not depend on our own judgment, but accept the infallible voice of the Church. The reason for this is that the truths which we believe

are not human truths. They are not the result of human calculation; they come from Christ; they are divine. We could not reason out all those truths—we accept them on the authority of Christ. We trust Him. You can understand, then, how those who lack humility will always, in their pride, feel themselves capable of deciding all about Christ.

The fourth century saw other brilliant champions of the cause of Catholicity (see Application, 4). With the help of these men the Church won her great victory over heresy at Nicæa, in 325. Today, no Catholic doubts the divinity of Christ. In all cases, after the battle was over and the smoke had cleared away, it was found that those who remained with the Pope and bishops were on the right side, though sometimes a heretic would find followers for long decades among the leaders of a certain section of the Church.

### **SAINT AUGUS- TINE**

Another great battle in the fourth century was waged around a man. Prayer, devotion, worries, and long searchings entered into the conflict.

A brilliant and pleasure-loving youth found the world alluring and felt an intellectual attraction for the heresies of the day. But the world proved empty; heresy gave no soul-satisfaction, and finally, at the age of thirty-three, Augustine yielded to grace, to his mother's prayers and intercessions, and to the powerful appeal of a great bishop, St. Ambrose, and was won

to the service of Christ. Outside of St. Paul's conversion, no more significant victory for Christ ever took place among the great minds of the world. Augustine not only became a saint, but he routed the heretics. He composed treatises that are still supreme in Catholic thought. He was the author of that famous sentence: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and restless are our hearts until they rest in Thee." (When discouraged or tempted, recall this sentence.)

## THE DIVINE MEANS

A certain historian, Gibbon, attempted to account for the conversion of the world by natural means, such as the conditions of the time, disgust with paganism, etc. Any normal man, however, who studies deeply, must arrive at the conviction that other than natural means were necessary to enable the Church to triumph as she did. She was victorious because of the divine aid given her by her Founder Jesus Christ. He had predicted the persecutions and the false brethren. He foresaw how the forces of evil would attempt to mutilate His truths, and He intimated that many would be lured away. But still He had said: "Behold, I am with you all days." It was for this reason that the Church never lost courage.

Not by human means alone, then, did the Church resist the world, the flesh, and the devil; not by the



mere eloquence of an Augustine or of an Athanasius did she repel heretical onslaughts. The hand of the unseen Leader was there, keeping the truth uncontaminated, guiding the bark of Peter. It is foolish to assert that the sagacity of churchmen accounts for the victories of the Church. If the Church were a mere human institution, she would have gone the way of all human institutions long ago.

### APPLICA- TIONS

1. What efforts are made today to restore pagan practices?
2. Judging from history, what is the best method of social reform for our day?
3. What lessons of prayer are seen in the case of St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine? Try to make an estimate of the influence exerted on great saints by their mothers. Read of the work of the Roman matron Paula, and her daughters.
4. Look up the life of St. Athanasius, the champion of Christ's divinity; St. Ambrose, the bishop; St. Augustine, the great theologian; St. John Chrysostom, the golden-mouthed orator; St. Basil, the mighty enemy of heresy in the Eastern Church; St. Jerome, the unwearied biblical scholar; St. Gregory of Nazianzus, the orator and theologian. These were all fourth-century friends of Christ. Judging from their lives, what preparation would best fit you to explain Christ's truths?



## CHAPTER XV

### THE NEW TASK

#### THE BAR- BARIAN PROBLEM

We have said that the Christians must have felt profound relief when, in 313, they were for the first time allowed legal existence, and found the Roman Empire open to them. They soon ceased to be a minority and became the majority, despite the fact that paganism was by no means dead. Prejudice still remained. Emperors; generals, and nobles were, however, frequently found to be Christians.

We have said also that the Council of Nicæa (325) was a great victory because it saw a mighty battle waged and won for the divinity of Christ. Unfortunately, the effect of this victory did not take hold on all Christians. Many rulers of Church and State, as well as vast numbers of the people, found it hard to throw off the influence of Arianism.

Moreover, though relief had come in one form, troubles of another kind soon loomed on the horizon. For some centuries, around its northern boundaries (recall Cæsar's wars), the Roman Empire had had to protect itself against the peoples whom we know as barbarians—an indefinite mixture of races. Hordes of

these people had been slaughtered at different times. Still they hung around the boundaries of the Empire. Many of them passed peacefully into the Roman provinces. A large number entered the army. As Roman power and influence declined, these tribes became too strong for a decadent empire to check. Naturally, many of them acted just as some American Indians did when the latter found that they need not fear a group of whites. As a result, civilization almost fell into chaos. For instance, Rome was sacked in 410, and this was not the last time that the Eternal City was to feel the effects of plunder, fire, and sword.

The Catholic Church—the survivor of bitter persecutions, the conqueror of Roman paganism, the uncompromising defender of Christ's truths—was now confronted with a new and terrible situation:

(a) Roman strength was gone forever.

(b) Barbarian tribes controlled most of Europe, and no one could tell what they might do.

(c) A large number of barbarians had been converted to Arianism, a heresy inimical to Catholicity.

(d) Most of the religious superstitions of the barbarians were directly opposed to Catholic truths and practices.

The outlook was indeed dark—enemies within and without the Church! It was to the Pope, the Father of Christendom, that civilized society now looked for help and direction. The Church had to civilize the barbarian and convert him to the true form of Chris-

tianity, and at the same time frequently to fight heretical emperors and fanatical heretics.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BARBARIANS**

“The barbarian invaders were little better than savages. In many ways their habits resembled those of the North American Indians. The men engaged in fishing, hunting, gambling, and drinking, whilst the women did the housework and cultivated a little wheat. Little did they know of cities, or of architecture, or of sculpture, or of industry, or of literature (they could not even write), or of the other things that constitute civilized life” (12). Hilaire Belloc says: “They had no conspicuous respect for women, of the sort that would produce the chivalric ideal. They were not free societies, but slave-holding societies” (11-b). They led a nomadic life, but at the same time in many cases made better material for civilized society than the sensual Roman. Superstition played a great part in their lives; it was this that made their conversion difficult.

### **MEETING THE TASK**

The dismal outlook in Europe in the fifth century caused many to flee. But the Popes and bishops, despite the dangers from outside and inside, remained at their posts. You can imagine how the people would feel, in our times, if police protection were removed for one day from a large city. In those days, robbery, pes-

tilence, and pillage everywhere led to general confusion.

Christ's command to Peter had been to "launch out into the deep." This the Holy See now did. Not only did the Popes work to save civilization, but they boldly launched new schemes of missionary activity. The greatest man behind this work was Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604). Monk, missionary, writer, administrator, statesman, and worthy leader of men, his zeal could not be diminished even by infirmities that kept him almost continually on his back.

The missionaries labored not only in the old Roman Empire, but pushed into the northern swamps and impenetrable forests—into the darkest depths of heathenism. The fifth century saw St. Patrick in Ireland, and you know the result. In the next century, the monk Augustine (not the fourth-century bishop) went to England, and St. Benedict started his monks forth from Subiaco (a place forty miles from Rome).

The Benedictines became the farmers, the schoolmasters, and the missionaries of Europe. From them the barbarians learned how to till the soil; by them the classics were preserved and the lamp of learning kept burning in those dark and troublesome times. From them the world learned the dignity of manual labor and how to be happy in one's work. For five hundred years they, and other orders of monks, kept at this work, until the minds and hearts of the people were Christianized; nor did they then cease to unite

prayer with work and study, for, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, they had about 37,000 monasteries.

As if to repay Europe for the Faith, the Irish monks came back in the sixth and seventh centuries and, by their deeds, wrote their names indelibly on the landmarks of France, Italy, Switzerland, and parts of Germany. Columba (d. 597) is still honored in Scotland. St. Columbanus (d. 615) spent twenty years in France and then labored in Germany and Italy. Ireland had escaped the ravages of the war, invasion, and plunder and had become an isle of "saints and scholars."

Other names of those days carry a special significance. Cassiodorus in Italy (d. 583) tried to unite the Goths and the Romans in thought, speech, and manners—just as America is now attempting to Americanize the immigrants. St. Boniface, an Englishman, in the eighth century took up missionary work and left his impress on Germany. Alcuin (735–804), of English birth, led in the educational revival of all Europe. Whole continents felt the influence of his ideas on education. Thus one country helped another.

## RESULTS OF THE WORK

It is not easy for us to imagine the difficulties that beset the missionary in those days. In some lands (Ireland) there was instant success; in others,

no results could apparently be had for centuries, *but the work went on just the same.*

Fine results were had in the tribe of the *Franks*, who became the masters of Europe and protectors of the Papacy. The giant who would kill was slowly turned into the soldier who bowed his knee before the Cross. "For five or six centuries men carved less well, wrote verse less well, let roads fall into ruin slowly, lost or rather coarsened the machinery of government, forgot or neglected much in letters and in the arts and sciences. But there was preserved right through that long period, not only so much of the letters and of the arts as would suffice to bridge the gulf between the fifth and the eleventh centuries, but also so much of what was really vital in the mind of Europe as would permit that mind to blossom forth again after its long repose. And the agency which effected this conservation of the seeds, was the Catholic Church" (II-c).

## APPLICA- TIONS

I. Go to your map of Europe and study the large areas over which the missionaries labored. The Catholic Encyclopedia will give you the work of St. Augustine in England (he was a Benedictine monk), of St. Boniface, St. Benedict of Nursia, Cassiodorius, St. Columba, St. Columbanus, Charlemagne, St. Isidore of Seville. Compare their labors as missionaries or statesmen with the work of missionaries among our



American Indians: Franciscans in the South and West, Jesuits in the North and East, and in South America.

2. What difficulties confront Catholics in America today that were present in the fourth and fifth centuries? What were the religious conditions among the early Catholic pioneers of your district?

## CHAPTER XVI

### LAY INVESTITURE AND THE CRUSADES

#### **THE MOHAM- MEDAN MENACE**

During the first ten centuries of her existence, there was scarcely a decade in which some trouble did not vex the Church, and yet, despite it all, she became and remained a world power.

During all this time, the bark of Peter had sailed into many unknown seas and had taken on various types of sailors. The barbarians, being gradually civilized, were destined to become the protectors of the Church. It was the Franks who protected the Popes, who also restored lands to the Papacy in order that the Popes might be independent, and thus was begun the Temporal Power of the Papacy, which lasted from 755 to 1870.

The barbarians were not yet thoroughly civilized when the terrible symbol of the Turk, the Crescent, appeared in Europe. The religion started by Mohammed (d. 632) appealed to the Arabs, and later to the Turks. Mohammed's rules are found in the book called the Koran. And the sword soon became the means of propagating this religion which contained a

mixture of Jewish, Christian, and pagan ideas and was called Mohammedanism.

Starting in Arabia, Mohammedanism spread swiftly across northern Africa, and even went 1000 miles up into Spain and France, till, in 732, Charles Martel, a Frank, dealt the Arabs a deadly blow in a nine-day battle at Tours. This battle saved Europe from Islam. Rome was partially sacked in 846 by the Saracens. In the tenth century a new type of barbarian, known as Magyar, appeared in northeastern Europe. The coasts of France were ravaged by the terrible Norsemen.

## **THE ENCUM- BRANCE**

When in trouble, people will cling together. You can imagine how your forefathers felt when a band of Indians suddenly attacked a settlement.

The early Christians were forced to live closely together in order to ward off the unending attacks of infidels on every side.

It was because of such conditions that the institution known as Feudalism arose. Huge walled castles were built for protection. The feudal lords managed the castles and the surrounding territory and gave protection to the serfs and fief-holders. In return for their protection, the serfs worked the land of the feudal lords.

Many bishops became feudal lords because there was no one else to take the situation in hand. Since feudal

lordship was a worldly office, lay rulers gradually gained some influence in the choice of bishops. It thus came about that unworthy or worldly men would get into the office of bishop. This is the origin of the custom known as *lay investiture*, namely, the practice of allowing lay rulers to choose bishops and abbots and to install them in office. In time this became an encumbrance, a burden on the spiritual work of the Church, because the lay rulers frequently placed the wrong kind of men in spiritual offices.

To ward off the attacks of the infidels, it had been necessary for the lay and ecclesiastical powers to work together, but once the attackers were defeated, it was not well that laymen should seek spiritual offices for their friends who were not suited for spiritual work.

Lay investiture was a serious handicap to the Church, and it required a very courageous leader to order unworthy leaders not only to give up office, but to cease dictating as to how the Church should be governed.

In the eleventh century, there was boarding in one of the Benedictine schools in Rome a youth of tremendous will power. He became a monk, known to the world as Hildebrand, and later as Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085). It took the mighty strength of this man to break the grip of the State on the spiritual power of the Church. He had been only a poor carpenter's son, yet he rose to be one of the greatest rulers in history.

You can understand something of the courage that

is required to root out long-standing abuses. "Of the awful obstacles such workers encounter, all history speaks. They are at conflict, not only with evil, but with inertia; and with local interest and blurred vision and restricted landscapes. Always they think themselves defeated, as Gregory did when he died. Always they prove themselves before posterity to have done much more than any other mold of men" (II-d).

**FREED  
FROM THE  
ENCUM-  
BRANCE**

Hildebrand was the people's Pope. As a result of his victory, the people soon began to have more faith in their spiritual leaders. This is one reason why, in the eleventh century, Europe awoke to a new interest in life. Out of that "darkness," the vigor of the Middle Ages arose. Those ages produced "an intense and active civilization of their own; a civilization which was undoubtedly the highest and best our race has known, conformable to the instincts of the European, fulfilling his nature, giving him that happiness which is the end of man" (II-e).

The Middle Ages are an intensely interesting epoch. The tales of the Spanish fights against the Moors are full of knightly romance and daring deeds. The people of those days loved to hear of and to imitate such feats. Travel and vision began to come into their lives. It will surprise you to learn that many of the ideas of our present-day literature originated in

those centuries. According to our standard of living, life at that time was hard ; but people were prepared for it, and they were happy. Chivalry, which began in those days, helped greatly to soften the hardness of life.

## THE CRUSADES

In the eleventh century, the Turks, who had acquired possession of Jerusalem, horribly maltreated the Christian pilgrims who were continuing the century-honored tradition of making trips to the Holy Land. The Christian world was enraged, and an inflamed enthusiasm sent thousands into the crusading armies. The Crusades were originally expeditions undertaken by knights and others who vowed to liberate the Holy Places from the power of the infidels. A crusade was no small undertaking. The Eastern Christians would not always coöperate with the Western armies. A march of two thousand miles or so was necessary if they went by land, and that largely through enemy country. The wars in Spain had taught the Christians military tactics, but lack of coöperation often spoiled the best-laid plans.

The outstanding feature of the Crusades was the enthusiasm of the participants. Men, women, and children "took up the cross" for the love of Christ. The first Crusade took place in 1096 and the last one, the eighth, in 1268.

The Christians captured Jerusalem, but could not



hold it. As a result, the Crusades failed in their principal purpose. Their benefits, however, were many, and "humanity is the richer for the memory of their heroism and chivalry." They increased the democratic spirit; they gave a spur to navigation; commerce was promoted and the Turk was placed on the defensive, which meant much indeed.

### APPLICA- TIONS

1. Read about Godfrey of Bouillon, Richard the Lion-hearted, St. Bernard, Innocent III, and St. Louis, King of France.

2. Compare the Crusades with the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade of today.

3. Has the State any influence in the choice of a Pope or of bishops today?

4. What is the worst menace that threatens Catholicism in our day?

5. Read "San Celestino" by John Ayscough, and "When Knights Were Bold" by E. M. Tappan.

## CHAPTER XVII

### BLOSSOMING OUT

You know how difficult it is for you to study when you are awaiting the outcome of an important contest. Well, for many centuries the people of Europe had been in this distracted state of mind because of incessant struggles and attacks. When a lull finally came, intellectual activity was immediately stirred up, although it had never been at a complete standstill. It had taken centuries to prepare the people for the highest fruits of civilization, and these came in the thirteenth century. It was then that the Middle Ages blossomed forth to such a remarkable extent that the thirteenth century has been truly called one of the greatest in history.

#### SCHOL- ARLY ENTHU- SIASM

Thirst for knowledge had been growing in Europe for a long time. The crowning of this desire took place when the first real universities of the world were founded. They rose to power in the thirteenth century. Before the sixteenth century, eighty-one universities were established, many

of them by Papal charter. A university, of course, meant advanced study. Great numbers of students flocked to these universities (Paris and Bologna alone had each between 6,000 and 7,000). Physical comforts were few at that time, and hardships were present in many a student's life (printing was not invented until about 1450). Certainly, those who persevered had a real desire for knowledge.

The system was well arranged. A student might pass from one country to another and yet feel at home in any classroom because of a common language, Latin, and a standard curriculum. Likewise, the professors frequently went from one school to another, and in some places women were among the professors.

There were many, of course, who could not enter the higher schools because they did not know Latin. There were large numbers of people who could neither read nor write, but do not conclude that these people were ignorant (see Chapter XLV, Application 5). Books and reading seem necessary for education in our day, but, before books could be had, the people learned from other sources. Travelling players brought the drama into the lives of all, wandering poets developed an appreciation of the higher things of life even in the serfs. The songs and poems which the people heard from the poets and retained in their memories were a means of intellectual, social, and moral development. The symbolism in the churches spoke volumes to the people; the opportunity for mechanics to develop their

talent gave them an appreciation of artistic work that cannot be approached today.

You have heard of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Church's greatest theologian (1225-1274), of Roger Bacon, the scientist (1214-1275), of Blessed Albertus Magnus and St. Bonaventure. These were only a few of the great scholars of the thirteenth century.

Then there was Dante (1265-1321), one of the three greatest poets of the world's literature. If you will look up the history of the Troubadours, the Meistersingers, and the Minnesingers, you will see what an influence poetry had on the people. The great Latin hymns that you sing at Benediction, and others, come from St. Thomas Aquinas. Professor Thorndike says that the theologians of those days wrote treatises on mathematics and performed natural experiments (*Scientific Monthly*, May, 1923, p. 497). Hardly, then, may they be called unscientific men.

## **ACHIEVE- MENTS IN ART**

The Gothic cathedrals, centuries in building, are still the admiration of the world. "The subject of the cathedrals, their architecture and decoration, is in fact inexhaustible. Priests and laymen worked with masons, painters, and sculptors, and all were bent on producing the best possible building and improving every part and every detail, till the amount of thought and contrivance accumulated in any single structure is almost incomprehensible. If any man

were to devote a lifetime to the study of one of our great cathedrals—assuming it to be complete in all its medieval arrangements—it is questionable whether he could master all its details, and fathom all the reasonings and experiments which led to the glorious result before him” (13).

The marvelous windows of stained glass are unsurpassed by anything in modern art; and if you study the works of Giotto, you will see how far advanced were the artistic tastes of the people of the thirteenth century.

## GOVERN- MENT

The thirteenth was a century of deep and intense political thought. Many modern ideas of government can be traced to that century. The Magna Charta had its origin in 1215. In the government of their order, the Dominicans put into practice the system of representative government. Each community elected a representative, who was sent to the general meeting of all communities. And since the clergy influenced the civil government of those days (Dominicans were sometimes advisers), it soon came about that the idea of representation took root in the State. “The Church originated representative institutions; the State adopted them” (14). St. Thomas wrote: “All men are equal by nature.” (In what American document do you find words like that?) “It belongs to the whole people, or to the public person who has charge

of them, to make law." On liberty of conscience, he wrote: "Those who have never accepted the Faith are in nowise to be forced into it" (15). One man, (Dubois, in the year 1300) even proposed the idea of a World Court of Justice, and the Church did much to limit war (Truce of God) (16).

The idea of representative government took hold in the civil government because the Crusades had given the merchant class a voice. The rulers of the thirteenth century were also unusual men. St. Louis, King of France, Ferdinand of Spain, Alfonso of Castile, Edward I in England, and Pope Innocent III on the Papal throne, are all worthy of study. And you will be surprised to learn that in the universities there frequently was student self-government.

## **SOCIAL LIFE**

Those were the days of "Merrie England." The living conditions of that age may seem crude to us, but remember that the test of civilization is in the happiness of a people. A note of cheerfulness pervades the thirteenth century. There was a fine spirit of coöperation. Trade guilds were strong and they protected and cared for their sick and aged members. Since most of the work for building was done in the work-shop at home, social conditions were of a high standard and a man could put his heart into his work. "There was one common creed, one ritual, one worship, one sacred language, one Church, a single code of manners and a



uniform system of society, a common system of education, an accepted standard of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. One-half of the world was not engaged in ridiculing or combating what the other half was doing. Nor were men absorbed in ideals of their own, treating ideals of their neighbors as matters of indifference and waste of power. Men as utterly different from each other as Stephen Langton, St. Francis, St. Thomas, Roger Bacon, Dante, Giotto, St. Louis, Edward I, all profoundly accepted one common order of ideas; and they could all feel that they were working out the same task" (13-a). The deeds of the knights are famous in song and story. They had a fine sense of honor and were noted for their respect for women.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. See what you can learn of the influence of Queen Blanche over her son, St. Louis.
2. Most men who study history deeply learn to admire the Church. What do you think is the reason?
3. Study the lives of St. Dominic and St. Francis, and you will learn the origin of two great religious orders. Then see what St. Clare did to help St. Francis. Study the meaning of this sentence: "The idea of voluntary poverty in the service of others was to electrify Christendom and remain a permanent force in the world."
4. In the *Atlantic Monthly* for October, 1921, there

was an article on "The Iron Man" by Mr. A. Pound. He stated (p. 438) that as far as the worker of an automatic tool goes in the factory, "it is impossible for him to grow mentally through his work." What sort of a leisure time programme would you suggest for such a worker?

5. Compare the trade guilds of those days with the trade unions of our day.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### REBELLION

#### ABUSES

(a) It seems a hard task to keep human nature in the path of virtue year after year. The fine workings of Christian life that had distinguished the thirteenth century, degenerated in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries into practices that showed a loss of the spirit of Christ. The Church had become wealthy, and this wealth was misused by many ecclesiastics. The people chafed and became discontented. The trade guilds lost much of their charitable spirit; even some of the monastic orders became tainted. Most of all, the literary movement of the Humanists spread abroad a bad spirit. It is true that the intellects of many became sharpened by delving into pagan history, but when these same scholars became proud and unbelieving, skepticism and immorality spread among the people. Those scholars worshipped an ideal paganism (which never existed); and when pagan views and pagan vices became dominant among the leaders of society, the people were soon affected.

(b) The fourteenth century saw, in the West, the sad sight of antipopes for a period of forty years.

Early in the century, French influence had been strong among the cardinals. The power of the French king, Philip the Fair, was sufficient to cause a French cardinal to be chosen Pope, and this Pope removed the Papal See to France. For seventy years the Popes resided at Avignon, and yielded unduly to French influences.

Meanwhile, Catholics everywhere were earnest in their efforts to induce the Popes to return to Rome. In 1378 an Italian Pope was chosen, and he returned to Rome. This Pope was lawfully elected, crowned, and recognized as Urban VI. But his tactics did not please a number of the cardinals; so, claiming that they had been forced in their former choice, they left Rome and chose Clement VII, who thus became an antipope. He resided at Avignon.

Several parties took sides in the quarrel, each claiming that their candidate was validly chosen. At the death of one claimant, the cardinals who had remained loyal to him, chose a successor. To make matters worse, another group of cardinals chose a third Pope, and thus there were two antipopes. This does not mean that the people thought there should be more than one Pope, but they were so wrought up over getting their own choice to be acknowledged that they were not disposed to determine who was the true Pope. But at the Council of Constance, in 1414, the two antipopes were deposed, the Roman claimant abdicated, and peace was restored by the election of a new Pope (Martin V).

This quarrel sounds shocking to us, but remember the immense power that was exercised by the king in the selection of cardinals; and, naturally, when cardinals, they were still subject to the influence that had placed them in their position. Historians now agree that during all this time the Roman Pope was the lawful successor of St. Peter. Hence the world was never without a Pope, although not all recognized the true one.

This quarrel is sometimes called the Western Schism. It was really not a schism, but a case of the wrong influence in selecting leaders and a resulting factional strife. There was too much worldly influence in the choice of cardinals. But the Church survived because she is divine.

The weaknesses of many churchmen at certain periods convince us the more that a divine power is behind the Church and sustains her. Remember that the Church had been in existence for one thousand four hundred years. Truly, a long time.

(c) The Inquisition is frequently mentioned as an example of the Church's cruel methods. We admit that the methods of the Inquisition were frequently cruel. But in those days, people had a different idea from ours as to what is cruel. Before condemning the Church, remember that the Inquisition was backed "by the Church, the State, and the people," and hence the blame cannot be placed on any one in particular, but must be shared by all three factors.

The people of the Middle Ages loved the Catholic Faith. It was sacred to them. To undermine that Faith entailed no easy treatment from those who loved it. Hence, you understand that when an enemy within the Church sought secretly to spread heretical views, there was bound to be trouble. The Albigenes, for instance, taught that the devil was as powerful as God; that the world was evil because it was the work of the devil; and that suicide was good. These views were repulsive to the Catholics of those days, and there resulted the Inquisition—an institution or a court to search out and try those who secretly spread false views. The Inquisition simply tried those who were suspected of heresy. Heresy was considered a crime against the State as well as against the Church, and the heretic, when found guilty, was generally handed over to the State for punishment if he persisted in his wrong views.

Later, in Spain, the Inquisition was used against the Moors and the Jews, who were secretly conspiring to destroy the State. The Spanish Inquisition was a State institution and exceeded the bounds of moderation, but if you understood the dangerous types of heretics and traitors with which it had to deal, you would not too readily condemn it.

(d) In the fourth century, Constantinople had been made a political center by the Roman emperors. It thus acquired prestige, and, as the centuries went by, the head (Patriarch) of the Church in Constantinople



gradually usurped influence over the surrounding bishoprics and took on a haughty air towards Rome.

Since Greek was the language of the Church around Constantinople, and the rites used in the East differed from the Roman rite, it was easy to find an occasion for quarrelling. The Eastern emperors had too much influence in ecclesiastical affairs; and, not only was a jealousy against Rome purposely fomented, but, from time to time, the Eastern leaders of the Church threatened to break away from Rome. They were confident of the backing of the Eastern emperors in such an undertaking.

A formal separation from Rome occurred in 1054, but this was healed at different times, until, in 1472, the final break took place, which, unfortunately, has lasted to our day.

This separation, called the "Eastern Schism," is not a heresy; it is a case of revolt against Church authority, largely inspired by jealousy. The Greeks still have most of the Catholic doctrines, but their work lags because they are separated from the center of Christendom. Constantinople has lost its political influence, and the Eastern Church is now much hampered. There is at present, a strong movement towards reunion with Rome.

Do not think, however, that abuses were universal in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The ex-

istence of antipopes did not prevent the practice of virtue. There were numerous examples of truly noble lives. There was much to commend in the life of those days. Saints there were—St. John Nepomucene (1340–1393), a martyr to the seal of the confessional; St. Catherine of Siena (d. 1380), who spread the true spirit of Christ everywhere; St. Vincent Ferrer (d. 1419); St. John Capistran (d. 1456); St. Elizabeth (d. 1336), Queen of Portugal; and Savonarola, who tried to reform the city of Florence in Italy.

Numerous reform meetings were held. But, although charitable and missionary activities prospered, it seemed that nothing could stop the trend of disrespect for authority and the growing social unrest. The new vices fostered by the Humanists only increased the general discontent. Many church leaders did nothing to remedy the situation, and as a result the people became more restless, the sovereigns grasped more power and spread discontent against the Church, whose property they coveted. Not a few ecclesiastics seemed desirous of throwing off all restraint, and so it came that the world was ready for a revolt.

## **THE START OF THE RE- BELLION**

There was living in Germany in the early sixteenth century, a young Augustinian monk named Martin Luther. He had a rather unhappy youth, and was morbid in many re-

spects. One day he would be cheerful and hilarious; the next day would find him brooding over the fancied loss of his soul. He dearly loved his own opinions; then again, he would be tormented because of his self-conceit. He himself said: "Oh, how much pain has the evil eye (this self-conceit) already caused me, and how much does it continue to plague me!" (17).

Luther possessed great ability as a speaker and a writer, and knew the Bible intimately. In 1517, he began to set up his opinions against the teaching of the Church. No form of abuse was too low for him to hurl at those who opposed him.

We condemn Luther not because he saw the need of reform (we agree that reform was needed), but because he deliberately changed the outlines that Christ had laid down. He denied the authority of the Church. He denied the Mass, Confession, the intercession of the saints, *the necessity of good works and the freedom of the will*. He forgot that "men must be changed by religion, not religion by men."

History has condemned Luther for setting himself up as the sole interpreter of Christ. The Catholic Church existed long before Luther; she is existing today, and her doctrines have always been the same. God would hardly have blessed her in this way if she did not have the right methods. Luther's life did not have the qualities that we would expect in one who claims to be sent by God. Why did he not strive to

have better men placed at the head of the Church, rather than destroy the unity for which Christ had so often prayed?

**WHY THE  
REBEL-  
LION  
SPREAD**

Before the middle of the sixteenth century, the revolt started by Luther was taken up by Calvin, and Henry VIII of England. England, Scotland, most of Germany, Holland, Switzerland and parts of Hungary and Poland were soon under Protestant influence. The reasons for this rapid spread of Protestantism were largely economic:

(a) Ambitious sovereigns coveted the power of the Pope.

(b) Princes and nobles looked with envious eyes on the rich monasteries, church lands, and church decorations.

(c) The doctrines of the "Reformers" had, for certain people, two attractions, namely, they were new (and the new always attracts), and they were of the sort that allowed people greater freedom in moral standards (justification by faith alone and the denial of free-will gave full vent to human weakness).

(d) The reception of the chalice and the use of the vernacular at all religious functions appealed to many.

(e) Calvin's permission of usury attracted the merchants, since, in the Middle Ages, the Church had never allowed the taking of interest on money loaned.

(f) Abuses at the Papal court made plausible the argument that no allegiance should be given to a foreign potentate.

**EFFECTS** Religious unity was destroyed by the Revolt, and the tyranny of civil authority was substituted. Civil wars, occasioned by the Rebellion, lasted for decades. The people were oppressed and enslaved; treasures of art and priceless manuscripts were destroyed; terrible seeds of discord were sown, even between the members of the same family. After four centuries, many still believe the horrible things falsely circulated about Popes, priests, and the Church's methods. The intellectual leaders of the Revolt felt this calamity. Melanchthon said: "All the waters of the Elbe would not yield me sufficient tears to weep for the miseries caused by the Reformation" (Epistles, Bk. IV, Ep. 100).

There was, of course, more Bible reading after the Revolt. The invention of printing had started the movement. But the scholars of the world are now beginning to change their opinion as to the benefits of the Revolt. For centuries, most historians refused to study the Catholic side of the question. "It is altogether a one-sided view, one indeed which wilfully disregards the facts, to hail in Luther the man of the new age, the hero of enlightenment and the creator of the modern spirit" (17-a).

**APPLICA-  
TIONS**

1. Cardinal Newman was at one time a non-Catholic, but his reading of history showed him that the Catholic position was true, and consequently he came into the Church, and in his book "The Development of Christian Doctrine" (p. 8) he says: "To be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant." What could you do to help in the correct presentation of history?

2. Many people today honestly believe in Luther. Can you see how they come to take that viewpoint? Does their sincerity make them right?

3. Study the life and works of Isabella of Castile.

4. Would you permit the bad example of an individual to keep you from the practice of your religion?



## CHAPTER XIX

### REGAINING STRENGTH

#### **CORREC- TION OF ABUSES**

Christ said: "So let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Who is in Heaven." The light had

indeed flickered low on the part of many leaders in the fifteenth century, and as a consequence, men were no longer drawn towards God. Zealous leaders and saints had long clamored for a reform, but the movement was not able to make much headway, until Pope Paul III (1534-1549) began to place the right men in office.

In 1545, the famous Council of Trent convened. Abuses connected with indulgences were corrected, worldly ecclesiastics were kept out of office, seminaries were established, and better instruction was given to the people. The Council held that man had no right to change the doctrines of Christ; hence the Catholic method of reform was not to alter the Faith, but to better those who were supposed to practice the Faith. There had been plenty of good men all the while, but they had not been in a position to use their influence; when they were able to use it, things soon took a change for the better.

**ATTEN-  
TION TO  
SPIRIT-  
UAL MAT-  
TERS**

“Seek ye first the Kingdom of heaven.” It is the duty especially of ecclesiastics to promote God’s interests by example and effort. This is what Paul III did, as did also the strong-minded Popes who came after him.

Great bishops, enthusiastic religious orders, zealous priests backed up the Pope in his work. Saints Charles Borromeo, Philip Neri, Vincent de Paul, Francis de Sales, were some of the great men who correctly interpreted Christ and whose influence for good still is felt in the world. Likewise St. Teresa’s power for good continued throughout the centuries. She lived from 1515 to 1582. St. Peter Canisius, S. J., labored in all the German-speaking countries, and his recent canonization showed the world what marvels he had wrought.

The pages of history thrill with the work of the early Jesuits. Founded in 1534, the Society of Jesus, in 1707, had 777 colleges with a maximum attendance at one time of nearly 210,000 students. Just think of their influence on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. “There never has been, nor will there ever be again, such a combination of science and tireless zeal, of study and eloquence, of magnificence and mortification, of world-wide propaganda and unity of purpose,” says the (Protestant) historian Ranke.

The reason for this spiritual rejuvenation can be found in the fact that attention was again paid to the

souls of men, to their spiritual needs; and success followed because the leaders practiced what they preached. Selfish and crafty sovereigns might again persecute the Popes, but they could not destroy the faith of the people in their spiritual leaders, who sought first of all the Kingdom of God. The Irish had been loyal for long centuries despite English persecution, and they still refused to barter their Faith for worldly gain; the French Revolution (1789) did not destroy the Faith of the French people; the Austrians felt the iron hand of Joseph II, but they remained firm; and German Catholics likewise showed their mettle at a later date. Despite it all, the Church gained ground.

This seems the more remarkable when one considers the reign of heathenism that the French Revolution inaugurated. Contempt was heaped upon everything religious. Prolonged effort was made to destroy faith in God, faith in the Church, faith in the leaders of the Church. The effort perseveres even to our own day.

### MISSION- ARY WORK

If you feel that the days in Europe were dismal after the Protestant Revolt, or that repeated attacks by the secular powers wearied the Popes, then read how, during those troublesome times, there went forth missionaries, as of old, to every corner of the globe, with Papal mandate. Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, and, later, Jesuits and others followed the explorers; and wherever they went, there

went the missionaries to spread civilization and the Faith. The enemies of the Church in Europe succeeded in closing many hearts against her influence, but the missionary and explorer opened up thousands of others in the "field afar."

India was reached in 1534, the Philippines in 1577, and the work of the conversion of these lands was begun.

St. Francis Xavier was in Japan in 1548 and baptized multitudes everywhere. In the same year, Brazil first saw the Jesuits. In time, all of South America became Catholic. Read in the Catholic Encyclopedia the article "Reductions of Paraguay" to learn the type of civilization produced among the savages. All of Mexico became Catholic also. The University of Mexico was established in 1553 (Harvard was not founded till 1636), and the natives were so well instructed that many catechisms were translated into the native tongues for them.

"The earliest schools within the present limits of the United States were founded by the Franciscans in Florida and New Mexico. In 1629, four years before the establishment of the oldest school in the thirteen eastern colonies, there were many elementary schools for natives scattered throughout the pueblos of New Mexico" (18). Read of the work of the Franciscans in California. Quebec was founded in 1608, and the missionaries were co-workers of the founders.

So it was throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and

even eighteenth centuries; those calm and daring warriors for souls journeyed over the unknown wilds of America to extend the Kingdom of God. Joliet and Marquette, explorer and missionary, were the first white men to greet the Valley of the Mississippi. While blind fanatics were tearing down altars in England, the missionaries were building "more stately mansions" in the hearts of savagedom.

But the missionary work was not limited to those on the forest trail. Back in the convents and monasteries of Europe were the bended knees that strengthened the missionary. It is said that St. Teresa's conversions through prayer equalled those made by St. Francis Xavier. The Carmelites and the Capuchins, by their lives of austerity, were the salt of the Kingdom of God.

History has yet to pay a fitting tribute to the missionary work done by diocesan priests in America. They were the bond which drew together the scattered flock; they were the builders. Thousands of them were never known outside of parishes or dioceses where they labored; yet it is to such unheralded men that the progress of the Church is frequently due. And from the ranks of such men came in the nineteenth century also the majority of the great bishops, archbishops and cardinals of our country. The affability of Bishop Cheverus won over the stern Puritans of Boston; Bishop England walking the streets of Charleston, S. C., in sole-worn shoes could nevertheless be invited



to speak before Congress; Archbishop Hughes of New York, defender of Catholic school rights and supporter of Pope Pius IX, was able to dissuade France from recognizing the Confederacy in our Civil War. Cardinal Gibbons was beloved by all classes and creeds as America's finest citizen.

## RESULTS

Many a time since the Protestant Revolt, critics have predicted the dissolution of the Church. Her continued vitality is more than puzzling to her enemies. Think of the strength that is hers despite modern unbelief. Think of that mighty missionary effort that she put forth after the Council of Trent. "Her acquisitions in the New World have more than compensated for what she has lost in the Old," said Macaulay. And in all times she has contributed quietly to the scientific and political knowledge of the world (32).

## APPLICATIONS

1. The work of the Church is to preach the Gospel to "every creature." Look back over her history and see how she kept at that work, even in the most troublesome times.

2. Because of prejudice, many are afraid to go near a Catholic church. What can you do to overcome that repugnance?

3. The Catholic Encyclopedia will tell you about Chateaubriand (1768-1848), who took up the chal-



lenge of the scoffer and in his book, "The Genius of Christianity," riddled the arguments of unbelievers and showed what the world owes to our religion.

4. Read Cardinal Newman's sermon, "The Second Spring" (published in pamphlet form by the Irish Catholic Truth Society, and by Herder, St. Louis).

## CHAPTER XX

### THE CHURCH IS A WORLD-WIDE FORCE

Picture to yourself what a long lapse of time nineteen centuries is. Then recall the attacks, the defeats, the losses the Church has suffered. Yet she has weathered them all and appears perpetually young and full of vigor.

Moreover, in all those centuries she has gone wherever civilized man has set foot. She has never been limited to any one country, race, or clime. She has been, in a true sense, world-wide.

#### **NUMER- ICAL**

**STRENGTH** Dr. Cooper says that a world traveller, starting in the United States, "would find that 73% of the church-going population of such cities as Boston, New York, Cleveland, is Catholic. In all, there are close to 20,000,000 Catholics in the United States, and 10,000,000 in her possessions. This traveller would find 3,000,000 Catholics in Canada; 13,000,000 in Mexico; 4,500,000 in Colombia; in Peru 6,000,000 and 20,000,000 in Argentine and Brazil. Crossing over to Europe he finds 6,000,000 in the British Isles and in Ireland; 7,000,000 in Belgium; 2,000,000 in Holland;

5,000,000 in Portugal; 1,500,000, in Switzerland, and some millions in Russia, despite an unwillingness to recognize the Primacy of Rome. Protestant Germany as it stood before the war had 22,000,000 Catholics and in Spain there are 18,000,000 and in Italy 33,000,000. In Africa there are 3,000,000 and another million in Australia and in Oceanica, 2,500,000 in India and Ceylon, and 2,600,000 in Indo-China. Altogether in the world there are about 400,000,000 Catholics. Were they arranged fifty abreast in a serried column, they would stretch from New York to San Francisco and more than half way back again." It is not claimed that all faithfully practice their religion. You realize that not every Catholic appreciates his Faith. Many drop away; many come back; quite a few are brought into the fold every year. The figures shown above may not be complete, but they give an indication of where Christ's word has been preached.

**HER FREEDOM**      The Church is international also in other respects. She is not controlled by any group of capitalists, or legislators, or kings. She is not confined to any one nationality, nor limited to any school of thought. She alone has been able to act internationally and to keep herself free from the deadening effects of State control. Many nations have tried to control her; some have succeeded for a while in making their influence felt in higher affairs, but today the Church is free as never

before in her history. France wanted to make the Church French, German leaders wished her to be German, Henry VIII said she would be English; but the Church of Christ can never be national. She is above nationality because her business is with the souls of men. As Pope Pius XI said, she is supranational.

### HER CO- HESION

There are about 1000 dioceses in the Catholic Church. Each parish is affiliated with a diocese, each diocese with Rome. The Catholic thus finds himself listening to the spiritual words of the one shepherd whom Christ appointed to feed His flock. You know something of the evil influences that lead many people from the path of truth and virtue. Is it not a marvelous thing that the Church is able all over the world to give to men the real truth about themselves and their destiny?

Exactly the same Sacraments are given in the same way to a dying negro in Africa as to a cardinal in Rome. "A Chinese infant is baptized by the same rite as an American infant. No such unity can be found elsewhere. Buddhism in Ceylon is as different from Buddhism in Japan as it is from Confucianism." Is it not wonderful that you can go to the same Mass in Chicago, Rome, Calcutta, or Pekin? Realize, then, that you hold membership in a tremendous organization. And all of this is accomplished despite the sharp antagonisms that exist between different races and

colors. Also, this unity becomes more remarkable when you think of the demands that the Catholic Faith makes on a person from the moral viewpoint, for instance, in the matter of chastity, of Confession, of the unity of the marriage bond and of weekly participation in the Mass.

**WHAT  
YOU CAN  
DO FOR  
HONEST  
AMERI-  
CANS**

You know what the Church tries to do in your parish. That is what she attempts to do the world over. Always, everywhere, her task is to watch over the spiritual welfare of those entrusted to her care.

Because the Church is world-wide, men give easy credence to the suggestion that she is not "patriotic." She is accused of harboring political designs, of attempting to control the government of the country.

Thinking men, of course, realize that Catholic unity is only in spiritual affairs, and that no American Catholic would ever seek anything but religious direction from the Holy Father. But the problem before you is to enlighten the people who do not think, people who easily yield to prejudice, and to show them by your life that the Church is world-wide, not in politics, not in finance, but in the spiritual good that she accomplishes. Because of the Church, millions try to be honest, industrious, pure, loyal to their country, and faithful to their home ties. The Catholic Church is a

world-wide force against crime, divorce, and every excess. She is the patron of temperance in all things. She uplifts the laboring man and shows him his true dignity; she fills life with hope; she is a bulwark against those who would make man a mere creature of chance, a victim of circumstances, or only a high-strung nervous organism.

By leading a truly Catholic life, you can convince men that the force of the Church lies in spiritual ways. Christ wants you to show the world how His teachings work out.

### **APPLICA- TIONS**

1. Why are narrow-minded and selfish Catholics not truly Catholic?
2. Are you aiming to be a parish-wide or a city-wide force?
3. What means do you use, as a boy or a girl, to help people lead better lives?
4. Life in the cities looks attractive from the outside; but what advantage does the country possess for enabling one to get closer to God?
5. In what countries are American missionaries now spreading the Gospel? What magazines keep you informed of their work?



## CHAPTER XXI

### THE CHURCH IS STILL CHRISTLIKE

Men will always be attracted to Christ.

Yet not all will understand Christ aright. Heartless scholars may make Him out to be merely a myth, but open-minded scholars will see, with the real men of life, that Christ is "their Lord and God."

The question for these latter to settle is: "Where do men obtain a correct interpretation of Christ?" Does any Church today possess the correct view of Christ? There is absolutely no ground for the supposition that Christ wanted men to take their own individual views of His Revelation. Can a man find, to-day, a definite and official view that does not change with every change of officials? Has organization killed the spirit and left only dead routine and empty forms?

Observant men see what is happening to churches which have no creeds. Honest men know that once the truth is given, it has to be guarded and protected against heretics who would tear it to pieces, as the Jews tried to destroy Christ. If the enemies of Christ used such tactics against His very Person, what will not modern Pharisees do to His truth if the Church does not protect it?

Skeptics claim that the Catholic Church has wrapped Christ up in a formula, in a dead creed. These men profess a hatred of "creeds." They employ a subtle method of continually heaping scorn on what the Church teaches, and they believe that, in the accumulation of attacks, the real Church may be hidden from the people.

Certainly, Christ was opposed to cold and empty formulas, but He had no sympathy with the absurdities of every little wiseacre who imagines himself fit to impose his views of religion on the world. Men have wrangled and fought and held opposite views of life since the beginning. They cannot all be right; and no one's views have been universally accepted. What individual or what institution impresses the world as being more Christlike than the Church that has kept its course triumphantly through the long line of centuries?

### **STAND- ARDS OF JUDG- MENT**

(a) The Catholic Church alone can trace her origin back to Christ. All other churches have human founders. Christ said: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church." Which Church can rightfully claim to be built upon Peter? Peter went to Rome and founded the Papacy there. Since that time, Catholicism has been established in Rome.

The fact that not every one of the many leaders of

the Church has been just what Christ would wish, is no argument against accepting the Church. We do not refuse to accept the Apostles because Judas was a traitor. If the wrong man became president of the United States, we would not discard the Constitution. We would try to get him out of office, but retain the Constitution.

(b) Christ wished unity. "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us" (Jn. XVII, 21). Now that means unity of belief, not merely a social unity, for He prayed that the world might "Believe in Him" (XVII, 20) and "Believe that thou hast sent me" (XVII, 21). Is there any Church aside from the Catholic Church that is international and at the same time one in belief?

(c) Christ said: "Suffer the little ones to come to Me" (Mk. X, 13-16). What Church makes the most strenuous efforts to save the little ones for Christ?

(d) Christ said: "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (Jn. XV, 20). Why do men persecute Catholics? Why not other churches?

(e) Christ said: "This is My Body; this is My Blood. Do this for a commemoration of Me" (Lu. XXII, 19). Catholics alone believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, and their belief in the Real Presence brings them close to Christ.

(f) In places where it is hard to draw the people to church for divine worship, what Church is it that is crowded on Sundays? What Church grips the hearts

of the people? What was it that led a non-Catholic, President Stone of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, to say that the doors of a Catholic church always stand open to the working man, no matter how lowly or ragged he may be? (*Chicago Tribune*, March 1, 1924).

(g) It is claimed that in "the beginning Christianity consisted of a life founded upon devotion to a person, while Catholicity consists of devotion to a system, to an organized body called the Church" (19.) How then can you account for the fact that frequent Communion is preached so constantly since Communion involves Christ Himself, in Person? Catholics believe that they receive Christ's Body and Blood; can anything be more personal? The Catholic Church does not merely have her people read about Christ in a book, but she brings Him personally to the individual. Is not that Christian?

(h) The Catholic Church does not change her views of Christ's truths from time to time. Study the changes occurring outside of the Church.

(i) Note the number of eminent converts to the Catholic Church. Learn of the sacrifices they make, and then study their judgment on which Church is the most Christlike.

(j) Christ said: "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mk. X, 9). What Church takes this stand against divorce?

**A FAIR  
CHANCE  
FOR THE  
CHURCH**

For four hundred years, men have read history that was largely a misrepresentation. Their minds have been filled with prejudices against the Catholic Church. Consequently, it has been hard for the Church to obtain a hearing. Converts speak very frankly about the false impressions that had been bred into them.

We realize that many who dislike the Catholic Church are honest and good people. When we tell them that the Church alone (despite the faults of her members and leaders) is truly Christlike, we do not say that in a spirit of antagonism, nor to raise accusations against the honest motives of outsiders. Yet, we believe that people may be perfectly sincere and honest without being right.

Since Christ wished that there be but one Church, we would like to show them that in the Catholic Church alone are Christ's truths correctly presented.

If outsiders but knew the truth, they would see that it is the honest aim of millions of Catholics to be loyal to Christ, to imitate Him. They would find Catholic leaders honestly trying to present Christ correctly to the modern world; they would see thousands of missionaries giving up comforts and luxuries to preach Christ; they would understand that the honor given to the saints is not idolatry, but a commonsense means of approaching Christ along the paths by which others

got there; they would also see that Confession is consoling and salutary.

The Church is exact in her doctrines; that is necessary since men are prone to misinterpret. Yet this exactness does not exclude the real spirit of Christ. When Catholics listen to a sermon, they know that the priest is not giving them some of his own ideas on Christ, but a definite, official view, and they accept that as the true Christian view, not as a man-made view, not as an individual's view.

## **APPLICA- TIONS**

1. Do you know of cases where "social pressure" was brought to bear against those intending to enter the Church? How can you help needy converts?

2. Obtain a list of pamphlets published by the Catholic Truth Society. Try to keep on hand some that you think would aid you.

3. Someone has said: "It is the character and conduct of Our Lord, His words, His deeds, His sufferings, His work, which are the very food of our devotion and the rule of life." Would not such a habit of thought, coupled with frequent Communion, keep you Christlike?

4. A real Catholic will not condemn non-Catholics who do not see the Church as we see it. Faith is required to believe in the Catholic Church. Be kind to those seeking information on the Church, but cast not your pearls before swine. Your Church has proved



its worth by centuries of existence. In place of defending the Church against those who like to start arguments, simply make them give the grounds of their assumptions. Place the burden of defense on them. For the sake of notoriety or for a financial reason, some will attack the Church—cast not your pearls before swine.

## CHAPTER XXII

### FAILURE OF THE MAN-MADE STANDARD

**THE SELF-SUFFICIENT ATTITUDE**      The preceding lessons have shown you that the Church may rightly be considered your guide in matters of eternal value and in rules concerning the game of life. But you have noticed how people frequently like to rely on their own opinions. This tendency is especially noticeable among self-constituted leaders in religion. In trying to solve the "what," the "why," and the "where" of life, such men consider themselves capable of leading their fellows. They object to an institution, such as the Church, guiding men, but they would gladly have people follow a *Man-Made Standard*; that is, they wish their own views to be followed by others.

To believe that the big questions of life were explained accurately and reliably by Christ, that Christ placed these explanations in the hands of the leaders of His Church, and that there is still that one Church which preserves intact the explanations of Christ, requires a little humility. It requires submission of one's own opinion to divine truth; and such an act is difficult for self-sufficient persons.

**FAILURE  
TO EX-  
PLAIN  
CHRIST**

Many claim to accept Christ, but refuse the explanation offered by the Catholic Church. They frequently boast that every man is sufficient unto Himself when it comes to understanding Christ. With great "loftiness of words," they set their views before the people, but they fail to see that no two of their opinions agree. To some, Christ is divine; to others, He is superhuman; to others, a religious fanatic; to others, merely a myth. Now, any sane man knows that Christ could not have been a dozen different things. There can be only one fundamentally right view of Christ; and, after centuries of discussion, men who rejected the Church's view have failed to give to the world a view that can stand the test of time and that commends itself to people of sound judgment. The answer of Bossuet can still be given to them: "You change; therefore you are not true"; for divine truth does not grow old, does not change, but is the same year after year. Christ does not change, and yet the self-sufficient men cannot come to an agreement on Christ.

In every generation, there arises some writer or leader who possesses an attractive style. He is usually a man who is strong in words, but weak in deeds. Thousands are caught by the glitter of his phrases. He himself will object to accepting Christ on authority; yet he demands that the people accept all that he says, and that without real proof. He sets

up his own views on virtue, on immortality, on Christ, on God. And the results, among those who accept his views, are always the same—muddled heads, broken hearts, blighted hopes. Whenever God's views are rejected, the people can be in some manner decoyed into accepting a fake hope, but they will find only emptiness.

**FAILURE  
OF THE  
MAN-  
MADE  
STAND-  
ARD IN  
REAL LIFE**

For some decades, France had been run by those who boasted that they could throw God out of life. The word "God" was not even allowed to be mentioned in the school books. Religion was expelled from the schools. Members of religious orders were driven out of the country. The working people were told that there was no God in the heavens because the *learned* men of France had exploded the old superstition.

But, behold, when the World War came, France found that her true and reliable patriots were the soldiers and generals who believed in God. The religious, men and women, were anxiously recalled to defend France. The former air of defiance of the unbelievers now sank to a miserable wail of cowardice. It seems rather peculiar that they dropped their talk of a Man-Made Standard. War, as you know, is a test of real manhood and womanhood. The religious

and the priests went into the trenches. It seems strange that none of the *learned* men went there to preach irreligion. Rather than rely on such puppets, the men in the trenches coined this expression: "Religion is betting your life on God." So, in a real test, the Man-Made Standard cannot survive. God's standard, however, lives on forever.

### THE FAILURE OF FALSE SCIENTISTS

Science is good; it is from God; it has brought many to God; but in modern times there are those who attempt to leave God out of life and explain everything by science. Science is their god. As was recently

said by a free-thinker: "They turned from the priest and the temple to the scholar and the library and the laboratory" (*Chicago Tribune*, Oct. 12, 1925, p. 4).

It is all right to go to the scholar and the library and the laboratory for their proper uses, but to reject the fact that the priests carried a divine Revelation from Christ to the world meant the failure of an attempted Man-Made Standard. They simply "wrapped up sentences in unskillful words" (Job XXXVIII, 2).

The failure of such men can be seen from the following words of a convert: "We disbelieved in God and His government of the universe because we thought that science proved their non-existence; yet in

*reality we based our unbelief on the authority of a few men not much older than we were and who disagreed among themselves.* At the same time we ignored the statements of older and far greater scientists, and scornfully rejected the authority of the Church and the traditions and testimony of 1900 years" (4-b). "We believed that our mechanical inventions formed the principal test of man's advancement; but now we are beginning to see that the only real criterion of civilization and progress is *character*, that personal comforts can no more help a man who is deteriorating, than a new suit of clothes can cure a man suffering from cancer. We had supposed that happiness consisted either in the making or spending of money, but now we have discovered this to be a miserable delusion. Our modern unbelief brings with it no relief from the intolerable burden of the world, but rather an increasing discontent with present conditions, assuaged by no consoling vision of the future" (4-c).

The real scientists, the men whose authority lives on from century to century, are always sorry to see the self-sufficient type attempt to throw God out of life and to substitute man's standard. God's strongest supporters have frequently been among the best scientists, among those who strove constructively for the world's good. Newton, Kepler, Pasteur, Fabre, Mendel, were benefactors of the human race and also strong believers; they were men who accepted God's rule of the universe.



**THE CATHOLIC POSITION** Catholics believe that a message called Revelation has come from God through Christ. This Revelation is for the guidance of the human race, for young and old. It is a guide for you how to regulate your life: "That your Faith might not stand on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God" (I Cor. II, 5). You may not listen to the world's view of right and wrong. Your standard must be based on what God revealed, not what you imagine ought to be right or wrong. Catholics did not figure out for themselves that each individual has a spiritual soul, that each soul is destined for God's presence. These views came from Christ.

Those who refuse to believe that God made a Revelation, and that He entrusted it to the Church, flounder helplessly all their lives. They are like the men of whom St. Paul said: "Always learning, but never attaining to the knowledge of the truth" (II Tim. III, 7).

Catholics, on the other hand, think and ponder on the Revelation that Christ brought. They attempt to sound its deeper meanings. Their ingenuity is exercised in applying to life the truths that Christ made clear. There is always room for new insight and new appreciation of the truths that Christ brought, so that, as life opens before you, remember that there will be sufficient truth in the Church to test the deepest minds, sufficient depth to reward the most diligent students.

The Man-Made Standard failed because it rejected God's truths and hence was unable to satisfy the longings of the human heart.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Why are divine truths never out of date?
2. Show how true science and true religion aid one another.
3. Show how the standards of God must be upheld in the question of birth-control, in the daily practice of a doctor, in the treatment of abnormal children.
4. A recent novel depicts the cities of the future being run by a godless board of health, and one of the characters states that the swiftest road to efficiency is through controlled reproduction. The answer given him is as follows: "I do not think that I would care for a world with everybody in it sound and healthy and efficient and—heartless." What do you think of the answer?

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE INFALLIBLE VOICE

**THE SEEK-ERS FOR TRUTH** When you grow older, you will learn that, despite the noise made by unbelievers, there are always a large number of people, honest men and women, who try to find out the truth about life. They may, in their searchings, follow for a time the brilliant spokesmen of the Man-Made Standard, but as soon as they ascertain the inability of such leaders to satisfy the deepest longings of the human heart, they begin to ask themselves if there is any agency that can give them definite and sure information about the meaning of life.

It may be, sometime, your duty and privilege to explain to such people that there is an agency that can satisfy their hearts, and can speak to them with an infallible voice on the meaning of life. The Church, originally constituted to teach spiritual truth to men, is still backed by Christ's infallible power when she interprets life to Americans. Not only can she speak definitely, but consistently and unerringly.

**WHAT INFALLIBILITY IS, AND IS NOT**

Infallibility is a "supernatural prerogative by which the Church of Christ is, by a special divine assistance, preserved from liability to error in her definitive dogmatic teaching regarding matters of faith and morals" (Catholic Encyclopedia). It is not an inspiration; it is not a making known to the Church of divine truths. But it is a protection against error when interpreting truths already revealed. When the Pope defines "ex cathedra," as chief pastor of Christ's Church, teaching faith or morals and *intending to define officially*, then there is no doctrinal error in the definition.

Infallibility does not mean that the Pope can do no wrong. It does not mean that he cannot sin. It does not mean that he cannot make mistakes in ordinary human affairs.

**WHY CATHOLICS BELIEVE IN INFALLIBILITY**

History states that Christ said: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations . . . and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. XXVIII, 18-20). "He that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mk. XVI, 16). Christ Himself is infallible. If He is with His Church, is she not also infallible?

Moreover, Christ placed on everyone an obligation

to believe what the Church teaches. If the Church were subject to error in her definitions, just like an ordinary individual, could Christ reasonably condemn anyone for not believing her? Without Infallibility, there could be no absolute assurance that the Church is right. And assurance and definiteness are necessary before men can be obliged to accept a doctrine.

We believe, moreover, that the Pope, independent of the college of bishops, is infallible in defining faith or morals, because, as the successor of St. Peter, he receives the helps given by Christ to the chief shepherd of the flock. The flock has to be fed spiritual food even in our days, as well as in Peter's. And the food has to be protected from those who would adulterate it. An infallible Pope keeps the truth intact.

**INFALLI-  
BILITY  
AIDS THE  
MIND**

Those who misrepresent the doctrine of Infallibility assert that obedience to such a principle hampers the intellect in its search for truth, that it destroys a man's freedom to think. But freedom to think does not mean that one can accept the false, once the true is known. If you know that New York city exists, do you gain a reputation for loving freedom if you assert that it does not exist? Catholics know that they have the truth and they are in no need of false views. You would not call those who accept the existence of radio intellectual slaves; neither is it intellectual slavery to accept divine truths. In fact,

those who accept divine truth are the only ones who are really free. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. VIII, 32). You are free from all the fake religious views that grip so many in one century and are discarded the next.

The Church urges the correct use of reason. Where God has spoken clearly, we believe that human ingenuity cannot find a better explanation for the matter proposed. We accept God's explanation. Where God has not spoken clearly, human reason should be employed to discover what it can. God has left many truths to be uncovered in the different fields of life. There is still much to be learned about nature, about government, about education. But in learning about the Will of God, Infallibility is a guide. It does not leave us dependent merely upon human powers, which are weak at the best. Infallibility insures certainty where human reason could give only probability.

### **A TEST CASE**

You have heard that a Roman Congregation at one time condemned Galileo for teaching that the sun is the center of our planetary system and that it remains stationary while the earth goes around it. It was the teachings of Galileo which were condemned by the Congregation of the Index in 1616, but this decree "can raise no difficulty in regard to Infallibility, this tribunal being absolutely incompetent to make a dogmatic decree." Many agencies were attempting to



destroy revealed religion at that time and the cardinals of the Congregation thought Galileo's teachings and methods would destroy faith in Scripture. The Pope approved the decision to the "extent needful for the purpose intended, namely to prohibit the circulation of writings which were judged harmful. The Pope and his assessors may have been wrong in such a judgment, but this does not alter the character of the pronouncement, or convert it into a decree *ex cathedra*" (see article "Galilei" in the Catholic Encyclopedia). The Pope was not defining doctrine, nor did he address these decisions to the whole Church. If you study the circumstances of the case, you will see how the mistake was made.

It was Copernicus (1473-1543), a Catholic, backed by two cardinals, who gave the Copernican system to the world. Galileo popularized the Copernican theory. Opposition to this theory first came from Protestants.

Hence the Galileo case does not disprove the doctrine of Infallibility. (Look up the articles "Copernicus" and "Galilei" in the Catholic Encyclopedia).

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Can those who reject Infallibility ever be certain as to whether or not they have immortal souls?
2. Give three cases of learned men who fell into error.
3. Write out the advantages that Infallibility has for you as a member of the Church.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE BIBLE AND INSPIRATION

#### **WHAT THE BIBLE IS**

The Bible is a collection of writings, composed by about forty different men, under the inspiration of God, between the years 1400 B. C. and 100 A. D. It contains an account of God's dealings with the world. The first section, the Old Testament, has 45 books; the second, the New Testament, has 27 books, comprising a partial record of Christ's life and words, and the words of certain Apostles and Evangelists. Every boy and girl should know something of the books of Genesis, Job, the Psalms, Isaiah. And, in the New Testament, you ought to be familiar with the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and a few at least of the Epistles of St. Paul. You can make the Bible a life study and yet always find something new in it.

#### **HISTORY OF THE BIBLE**

For centuries before Christ, the Jews at their assemblies used to read the Bible, that is, certain books of the Old Testament. Individual Jews carried about with them parts of the Bible on small scrolls and read them from time to time. Indeed, the

Jews zealously guarded the Old Testament. The Jewish writer, Flavius Josephus (A. D. 37—about 101), speaks of the books which the Jews considered divine and “for which they were ready, in case of need, to die.”

The New Testament, likewise, as we have seen, was respected by the Christians, and is historically reliable. (It is due to the Catholic Church alone that we have accurate copies of the Bible.) There may seem to be contradictions among some of the writers, but when the texts are well studied it is found that one writer generally supports another, though each retains his own individuality. A large number of exaggerated accounts of Christ's life had to be rejected in the early centuries. In later centuries, false copies were circulated and the Church had to forbid Bible reading under certain conditions. Even today many are publishing their own versions which, they insist, are the only correct translations of the Bible. You can see how the original would soon be changed entirely if the Church did not guard the Bible.

Before the invention of printing, many men and women wore out their lives copying the Bible by hand. Many copies were beautifully illuminated (read the “Golden Legend” by Longfellow). In the Vatican Library, there is a Greek Testament of the eleventh century that is written entirely in letters of gold.

The printing press came into use before the year

1450. This first press might seem a crude affair now, but, within a hundred years after its invention, over 629 editions of the whole Bible, or portions of it, had been run off. There were also many editions in the vernacular before 1500. In the German language alone, there were thirty editions of the complete Bible before Luther's day.

## **THE INSPI- RATION OF THE BIBLE**

The Bible is not the product of human thought. A Catholic must believe that God is the Author of the Bible. "The Holy Ghost Himself, by His supernatural power, stirred up and impelled the biblical writers to write, and assisted them whilst writing in such a manner that they conceived in their minds exactly, and determined to commit to writing faithfully, and render in exact language with infallible truth, all that God commanded, and nothing else; without that, God would not be the Author of Scripture entirely" (Catholic Encyclopedia, Article "Inspiration," XII, 2).

That means that

(a) "The Holy Ghost gave the impulse to put into writing matter which God had willed that they should record; (b) gave the suggestion of the matter to be written, whether by revelation of truths not previously known or only by the promptings of those things which were within the writer's knowledge; (c) gave the assistance which excluded liability to error in writing all

things whatsoever may have been suggested to them by the spirit of God to be written." It should also be remembered that:

(a) The sacred writers may have been unaware of being inspired;

(b) They were not exempt from personal effort. The style was their own, and the perfection of their work from an artistic point of view was not insured;

(c) There was no error in the original text, as it left the hands of the sacred writers (mistakes may have crept in in copying);

(d) All parts of the Bible are inspired, not only the passages pertaining to faith and morals, but all without exception.

**FUNCTION OF THE BIBLE** (a) We can employ the Bible as true history to prove the existence of Christ and the early Church. The facts recorded in the Bible prove the Church to be divine. Once we know that the Church is divine, we can trust her when she tells us that the Bible is not only true history, but that it is also divinely inspired. We do not say first that the Bible is inspired and then prove the Church from it, but we say that the Bible is true history, and then rely on the Church to learn that the Bible is not only true history, but actually the Word of God.

(b) It is the function of the Bible to teach religion,

not science. The Bible teaches in language that is not scientific; we do not go to the Bible for scientific proofs; we go there for the Revelation that God has made about Himself and about man's nature. Neither the Church, nor the Bible, rightly understood, has anything to fear from science.

(c) We have said that Christ gave no hint that His religion was to be found in a book, but that He arranged for a living voice to interpret His truths. How could you rely on a book that is not complete, that might be changed at any time if the Church was not there to guard it? And is it not foolish to allow every man to put his own interpretation on the Bible? Without the Church, how could we even know that we have the correct words of Christ?

(d) The Bible may well be the companion of every Catholic. "It is acquainted with every grief and woe. It touches every chord of sympathy. It contains the spiritual biography of every human heart. It is suited to all temperaments." So, in saying that the Bible is not a sufficient guide for him who wishes to learn about Christ, the Church does not wish to detract from the true function of the Bible. She even grants indulgences for reading the Bible, and she wants you to persevere in the study of it. Years of effort will be required to fully appreciate the hidden beauty and truth of the Word of God. Reflection, deep and long, on its divine pages is required in order to grasp its truths.



**APPLICA-  
TIONS**

1. When books were few, the walls of churches were covered with paintings of Biblical scenes and truths.

Was not this "giving the Bible to the people?"

2. The true attitude of the Church toward the Scriptures can be seen from the fact that in the Middle Ages "the holy book of the Gospels used to be kept in the tabernacle together with the Eucharist" (20). The Gospels contained eternal Truth. Note also that the Book of the Gospels is incensed at Solemn Mass.

3. Learn the names of the books of the Old Testament, and read some chapters in the Psalms and in Isaiah from time to time.

## CHAPTER XXV

### MIRACLES

#### **WHAT MIRACLES ARE**

Miracles are works, outside the ordinary works of nature, that cannot be accomplished by natural forces, but in the absolute sense are the result of divine power. A divine miracle simply means that God intervenes in the operation of a natural law, but only in a particular instance. The ordinary workings of God's laws, such as the changing of a soul by grace, or the keeping of the earth in its course, are not properly miracles, because the one is secret and the other is ordinary. A miracle is an unusual thing, either in the work itself (raising of the dead to life), or in its effects (the gift of infused knowledge to the Apostles).

#### **POSSI- BILITY OF MIR- ACLES**

To those who deny that there is a God Who governs the world, miracles will seem an impossibility. But those who believe in a supreme Intelligence directing the universe, should have little difficulty in accepting the proposition that God can intervene in His own works. You know that things in nature work according to certain laws: the

law of gravity, the law of decay, the laws of growth. But God made all these laws; so why could He not change their usual mode of action? "There is no artisan who has not the faculty of modifying his work; no legislator who has not the power of derogating from his law." Should not the same freedom be allowed to God?

Our own minds work upon matter and change the ordinary course of affairs. God also can substitute His power in the working of a particular law. A boy throwing a stone in the air does not disarrange the law of gravity; he sets afoot a counteracting agency. Neither does a miracle disarrange the laws of nature or make the operation of a natural law uncertain, for a miracle is a rare occurrence.

## THE ACTUAL EXISTENCE OF MIRACLES

(a) *Past*: The Bible, considered merely as authentic history, relates many miracles. The enemies of Christ did not deny that He had worked miracles; they admitted even that the Apostles worked miracles

(Acts IV, 16). Honest witnesses are better reporters of facts than are some so-called scientists. An ordinary man is a safe witness in reporting on the raising to life of a man dead four days. We thus have plenty of evidence in history to back up the existence of actual miracles. Many so-called miracles might no doubt be explained on natural grounds, but in cases like this

(a dead man coming back to life after being in the grave for four days) there can be no doubt of the fact that a divine cause intervened.

(b) *Present*: No person is declared a saint by the Church unless it can be explicitly proved that miracles were worked through him. Study the miracles reported for the canonization of St. Teresa of Lisieux, or reports of the miracles wrought at Lourdes (34).

**PLACE  
AND  
VALUE  
OF MIR-  
ACLES**

Miracles were part of Christ's credentials. They manifested the glory of His Father. They proved that Christ came from God; they established His teaching as divine.

Again, Christ worked His miracles out of sympathy for suffering humanity, and hence they are visible portrayals of the inner renovation that Christ came to work in souls. His delivering the people from diseases symbolized the deliverance of their souls from the power of Satan.

When Christ came, the world was sunk in superstition, and strong evidence was needed to bring the people to believe in the true God. Christ's miracles performed this function. They were evidences, "not wrought to show the internal proof of doctrine, but to give manifest reasons why the doctrine should be accepted." A study of the different miracles of Christ will show you His power over lifeless matter, over vegetation, over men, over spirits, over death

itself. The miraculous multiplication of loaves and fishes prepared the people for the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. In our day, such outstanding miracles are no longer necessary because there are sufficient other evidences for the truth of Catholicism. Ours is no more a strange and new religion.

A Catholic is not required to believe all the miracles that are alleged to have happened. He acts prudently in awaiting the judgment of the Church concerning them. Miracles are not intended to force one to assent mechanically; they are invitations to belief, for God does not compel anyone to enter His Kingdom.

**THE TEST OF MIRACLES** (a) The character of the worker and his motives.  
(b) Do the works come within the reach of the senses?

(c) Are they absurd or sensible? Healing of the blind is sensible and good; talking with the dead is vain, absurd, and unnecessary.

(d) Search for trickery, especially in Spiritism. A good deed does not need to be done in the dark. Beware of anything afraid of the daylight.

(e) Are the works the result of a strong imagination?

**APPLICATIONS** 1. Why did Christ refuse to work a miracle for Herod? (Lu. XXIII, 8).  
2. A miracle is a good deed. But

many are reported to have become insane as a result of dabbling in Spiritism. Can anyone argue that good has come from such a practice?

3. A Catholic insults Christ when he goes to spiritistic séances. God has told us what He wishes us to know about the next world. Why try to pry into His secrets?

4. When it is claimed that miracles cannot happen today because the people are better educated and hence not so credulous as they were centuries ago, you might reply that many so-called eminent scientists seem quite credulous in regard to Spiritism and magic. It was not the credulity of the early people that made them believe in Christ's miracles. It was the evident facts before them.

5. Read, "Whose Name Is Legion" by Isabel Clarke, and "Necromancers" by R. H. Benson.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### EVOLUTION

**A THEORY** Men are always anxious to learn about the origin of things. Evolution is a theory which considers the present species (types) of plants and animals to have evolved (developed) from lower types that existed in former geological periods. Since man is partly animal, his body is thought to have developed from a lower type of animal.

**ITS REASONABLE SIDE** Since the theory of evolution can deal only with material things, it offers an explanation of the origin of material things, and of nothing else. The searching for such an explanation is truly the work of science. And when the scientist, seeking to explain the origin of things, studies nature and takes the findings of biology, geology, and anthropology, he secures evidence that life existed on earth long before our written records began. Examination of the fossils in the rock remains shows a gradation in the animals which existed at different periods. And when these gradations are compared, it seems reasonable to conclude that certain species of animals have evolved from earlier types.

The evidence that the body of man came from a lower animal, is, up to the present, inconclusive. Science will simply have to wait for further evidence before it can make a decision. Science "has no animal ancestor of man and her most searching inquiries have not found the slightest evidence for the animal origin of the human body."

### **ITS DAN- GEROUS SIDE**

Because many of those who delved into the theory of evolution wanted to destroy the idea of God, and because others, in delving, lost their Faith, the view gained ground that evolution overthrows the belief in God, or denies His creative actions in the world. Some arrogantly stated that God is not necessary, and that the idea of God was "evolved" by men.

These views are not the views of true scholars or of real scientists. A wrong-headed group of notoriety seekers can easily misrepresent things to the people. It was such a group that gave evolution so much undesirable publicity. Men of common sense realize that evolution, without the idea of God's power being behind it all, is inexplicable.

Talk about evolution tends to concentrate interest in the body, to the neglect of the soul. Thus materialism, which is a denial of the soul, creeps in and forces people downward. Evolution, as taught by certain materialists, is dangerous because its aim is to keep men's thoughts away from the soul and from God.

**IF EVO-  
LUTION  
WERE  
PROVED**

If Evolution were proved, the Church would have nothing to fear. There could be no contradiction of our religious beliefs. Centuries ago some leading Catholic thinkers (*e. g.*, St. Augustine) dwelt on the question of evolution. Evolution, if proved, would teach us more about God. A Catholic is free to admit theistic evolution, namely, a "theory which makes God the Creator of all things, including the power we call evolution." "If the theory of evolution were absolutely and finally established tomorrow, it would still be true that in the beginning God created!"

It is well to remember that the Bible was written to teach religion, not science. The Book of Genesis gives us the facts of the creation. It tells us that God is the cause of our being. To know that God's power is behind all the processes of life, is sufficient, whether these processes are evolutionary or not. God certainly is needed to explain the evolutionary process. If such a process exists, "He initiated it; directs it, and guides it; He knows whither it is leading." Natural development through laws implanted by God would only demonstrate God's power and glory more clearly.

**THE AT-  
TITUDE  
OF THE  
CHURCH**

Catholics must believe that God directly created the soul of Adam, that He directly creates the soul of every individual human being, and

that this soul is spiritual. The soul of man is not subject to evolution; it could not have been evolved from brute creatures. It is a simple substance, not composed of parts, and differs entirely from physical things.

The Church has said nothing officially about the evolution of the human body. The question is still open for investigation and discussion. No matter what the outcome may be, she knows that "without Him was made nothing that was made" (Jn. I, 3).

## **APPLICA- TIONS**

1. The body of itself does not constitute man. It is the soul that counts.

Keep this thought always uppermost in your mind.

2. Let the scientists discuss the question of evolution, and let religion be kept in a separate field. Insist that those who pose as scientists stay within their own domain. Their knowledge as scientists does not insure their ability to judge religious questions. The "man in the street" may be closer to religious truth than a prejudiced scientist.

3. Since real scientists hesitate about drawing conclusions where there is not decisive evidence, do not take your views from those who merely seek publicity.

4. Study the pamphlet, "A Catholic Opinion on the Evolution Controversy" by Dr. U. A. Hauber (St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa).

## CHAPTER XXVII

### RADICALISM

#### **ITS VARIABLE MEANINGS AND CAUSES**

The different movements in our day for the betterment of society are sure to challenge your attention at some time. Your wisdom and foresight will be taxed to the utmost in finding a right solution for the so-called social question.

The inequalities of life occasion much social unrest. When the working man sees himself getting less than a living wage and his employer rolling in wealth, he has a just cause for complaint. Yet there are those who have only themselves to blame for the hard situation into which indolence or vice have forced them. The proper treatment of such conditions cannot be pointed out to you now; only certain attitudes can be discussed.

Radical movements are found in education, industry, politics, art, science, religion and in general social life. All of them express the impulse toward change that is characteristic of human beings. Radicalism may be taken in a general way as a tendency to favor innovation. It will be moderate or extreme in proportion as the changes proposed are moderate or extreme. Again

the meaning of the term will depend on the person who uses it. An obstinate employer will call the American Federation of Labor radical. Yet Socialism calls it conservative and reactionary, while Socialism, in turn, is rejected on the same grounds by Communism. Within radical movements, there often are more or less conservative tendencies. Much harm is done in misleading the public by a mistaken use of terms. Those who denounce reasonable reforms as Socialistic assume a wrong attitude.

Communism and Bolshevism are but extreme forms of Socialism. Organized labor, the "Progressive" programmes advocated by various groups, are moderately radical in origin, but are in no way to be confounded with the extremes already mentioned.

## **SOCIAL- ISM**

"Socialism rests on three main assumptions: (1) that the present social order is bankrupt; (2) that the private ownership of capital is the cause of that bankruptcy; and (3) that the collective ownership of capital is the only effective remedy" (25-a).

There are two other assumptions which are usually associated with the Socialistic movement, namely, that character is shaped by environment and that human nature is capable of perfection. The former denies free will or the ability of the individual to shape his own destiny, while the latter leads to utopian schemes of reform.



Too often throughout its history, Socialism has allied itself with atheism, free love, class hatred, and disregard of the accepted standards of right and wrong. Much of its appeal comes from its exposure of evil social conditions. In picturing an ideal state of society, Socialism has found many followers. Yet, in its least objectionable form, it advocates an impossible perfection of social life. It disregards the deeper lessons that humanity has learned through the ages in claiming that social reform can be accomplished through institutions instead of improvement in character and fidelity to spiritual truths. "It is our duty as Socialists," says one of them, "to root out faith in God with all our zeal, nor is anyone worthy of the name who does not consecrate himself to the spread of atheism" (21). Under fair words and gilded promises, Socialists often disguise their real purpose. Like the wooden horse before Troy, the hidden enemy is not discovered until it has been admitted within the walls. You can be sure that Socialism is not a mere economic theory. Radical Socialism is an enemy of God and, therefore, a Catholic may not be a radical Socialist. And it is well to remember that perfection cannot be had under any form of human government.

## **BOLSHE- VISM**

Bolshevism, now being tried out in Russia, is an extreme form of Communism. If Bolshevism were honestly trying to better the conditions of all people, it

might have our sympathy, but in the form in which it is now being spread abroad, we cannot accept it. Bolshevism makes it a crime to teach religion to youths under eighteen. "The Bolshevist school is vested with the task of brushing aside belief in God and His divine Son. They need neither God nor religion" (8-a).

**AN OMNIP-  
OTENT  
STATE**

There are certain groups of Americans who would have the State regulate all the affairs of life, public and private. They would give the State power to dictate the personal habits of each individual; they would have all children educated in one type of State school. "My child," says one writer, "is first a national child. He belongs to the nation even before he belongs to himself" (33). Of course, this position is neither Christian nor American, for our courts have admitted the Christian principle that the child belongs to the parents, and not to the State. But you must be prepared to meet such State-worshippers, who seek to give all power to the State in order that they (the minority) may force their will upon society.

The "Reds" and the radicals are not the worst enemies of the country. Those, who under the cover of patriotism seek their own selfish ends, should occupy the prison cells ahead of many an indignant but honest worker. Seek for leaders who stand for social justice, who defend constitutional principles, and who

can detect the hypocrisy of the profiteer or the paid reformer.

## CARE IN REFORM- ING

There is much social injustice in the world; there is laxity in the administration of laws; there are sad family conditions among the poor, and also among the rich; there are problems which only the State can handle. But care must be had lest the reforming attempts bring in greater evils.

The first principle of social reform is that it must be based on the law of God. Many so-called reforms only "re-form" downward because they induce hypocrisy or destroy the initiative of the individual. It is always better to strive to build up inner convictions by moral persuasion. We should labor long and patiently to persuade communities to frown down improper practices. We would have more honest men in office, we would have cleaner literature and better movies if public opinion could be made to reject the opposite kind.

## THE AT- TITUDE OF THE CHURCH

(a) The Catholic Church insists that social reform is primarily a moral and a spiritual duty. She prefers to see reforms effected by practical idealism and enlightened public opin-

ion. Social legislation is favored when other methods

fail. Doing things by law is the least desirable way of doing them. But social problems have multiplied so rapidly and have become so intricate that a considerable body of legislation appears necessary to accomplish anything sound and permanent in the direction of social justice. The Church expects you to aid her in striving to bring about social justice. The principle that all men are brothers should be ingrained in your very being.

(b) The Church is a friend of law and order. She does not believe that the anarchist can accomplish anything worth while with his bombs. She forbids her children to listen to words of sedition and anarchy. She does believe in the right to private property because if that were taken away, there would be little incentive to action from a natural viewpoint.

Extreme conservatives are inclined to oppose social reform measures at every point. Years ago Pope Leo XIII issued an Encyclical on "The Condition of Labor." It gave an immense impetus to the efforts of those who longed for needed reforms. Very much of the labor legislation with which we are familiar, very many of the laws safeguarding elementary human interests in industry may be accepted and supported as steps in the direction of social justice. The Catholic student, being guided by the law and obligation of charity, will contribute to social progress by taking an intelligent interest in these movements.

**APPLICA-  
TIONS**

1. If you had evidence that wealth is creating too many class distinctions, what remedies would you suggest?

2. Someone has said that the individual's political liberty is safe enough in our day, but that his economic and civil liberties are in danger. Is that true?

3. What does the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference strive to do? Make a study of the American Bishops' Pastoral published after the World War. What is the social reform programme of the Central Bureau of the Catholic Central Society? Try to obtain and read some of the pamphlets issued by the Catholic Social Guild, of England.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### GOD CARES FOR US

#### **THE WORLD'S HARD- NESS**

The sight of so much misery, suffering, and injustice sometimes causes men to conclude that if there is a God, He takes no interest in the world.

Others try to find excuses for their lapses and readily adopt the theory that they have no chance to lead a good life because God had predetermined them for hell. Honest men are sometimes tempted to be discouraged by the way the wicked appear to prosper; and gratitude seems to be a rare virtue.

#### **THINGS TO RE- MEMBER ABOUT GOD**

(a) Each human creature is brought into existence through God's power. If men are interested in the work of their own ingenuity, so much more is God interested in those whom He has made to His own image and likeness.

(b) God is infinite, immense, all-powerful; He can extend His interest over the whole world. "For there is no other God who hath care of all" (Wisdom XII, 13). "He is not far from everyone of us; for in Him we live, and move, and are" (Acts XVII, 28). "He



made the little and the great, and He hath equally care of all" (Wisdom VI, 8). You see, we have the Word of God to assure us that He is interested in our condition.

(c) Christ was God. He was kind and thoughtful; He cared even for the little ones. How could we imagine God to be different from Christ? Christ as Man demonstrated to the world the qualities that are in God.

(d) The Crucifixion was undergone as an act of love for us. The Holy Eucharist, in which Christ is our Food under the form of bread, is a proof of God's profound concern for all men.

(e) God allows us to be tried. Our whole life is a period of trial. We cannot hope in each case to see the reasons of happenings. But we know that "God is faithful; who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able" (1 Cor. X, 13). Hence, under God, we are the masters of our destiny.

## **THE EX- ISTENCE OF EVIL**

A superior mind does many things which an inferior mind cannot grasp. In regard to God, we are all children. We cannot understand all that He does. We cannot hope to see why He permits certain things. Reason itself, universal belief, and our conscience, tell us that there is a God. Christ revealed that God to us as a kind, loving Father. We have learned to trust Christ; and we know that God is wise

in His arrangement of the natural world. Why, therefore, shall we not trust God and believe that He knows best what is good for us? If there is evil in this world we know that there is a reason for its existence. The reason may not be apparent to us in each particular case, but our part is to accept things as they are, bettering them where we can, but not complaining when they are not as we would have them. We know that:

### 1. *PHYSICAL EVILS*

(a) Are a result of original sin and that man's own sins bring on many evils. Vice may cause disaster.

(b) God's Providence can bring forth good from physical evil (a sickness may bring a man to know God).

(c) The existence of evil may develop men by compelling them to overcome obstacles.

“Ah! must—

Designer infinite!—

Ah! must Thou char the wood ere

Thou canst limn with it?”

(Thompson, “The Hound of Heaven”)

2. *MORAL EVILS* can be explained. Sin could have been prevented only at the cost of man's noblest faculty—free will. If God were able to create only men who could not sin, His power would be restricted (which is not possible). “God judged it better to

bring good out of evil than not to permit evil at all." The struggles against evil, the temptations to put our trust in wrong things, are but a test of our worthiness to enjoy eternal happiness.

You may sometimes think that the wicked prosper, but if you will observe closely, you will see that in the long run they usually receive their deserts even here below, especially in the loss of peace of mind and lack of consolations. Nature herself punishes the evil-doer. Another consideration is that God may reward here some good deeds which, in the absence of the sinner's repentance, He cannot reward in the next life. If God always visibly and promptly punished or rewarded men as they deserved, do you not see that many would be good from a wrong motive?

**OUR DUTY** (a) It is God's intention that we should ponder over His various attributes, that we should develop the habit of thinking frequently about His interest in us, His care of us, His presence everywhere, His mercy, His justice. Only the thoughtful individual will come to a realization of God's concern for each soul. Many lose their faith in God simply because they have never thought out God's ways of handling the world. Withdraw from the world now and then, to think, meditate, and pray. Silence often establishes the mental balance. Deep water is not easily troubled, and the life that is intimate with God is not easily disturbed. The world

never places much confidence in those who are quick to complain.

(b) While you are young, practice patience in suffering. Be not afraid to suffer insult or defeat in a good cause. Suffering has an important mission in the world. It makes men and women better.

“The brightest sanctities of highest souls  
Have blossomed into beauty in the dark.”

(Ryan )

(c) Realize that the world is not eternity. “Life passes, riches fly away, popularity is fickle, the senses decay, the world changes, friends die. One alone is constant. One alone is true. One alone will be all things to us. One alone can supply our needs. One alone can train us up to full perfection. One alone can give a meaning to our complex nature” (22). (Memorize this quotation.)

(d) Every person, whether he goes to church or not, has obligations towards God. Help your fellow men to realize this fact.

(e) In putting his trust in God, man loses none of his manliness. If you read the Book of Job you will see how suffering can be borne without the loss of one's trust in God (chapters II, III, VII, IX, X, XIV, XVI, XVII, XIX, XXIII, XXIX, XXX).

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Many believe that the human race will one day be perfect, that disease, crime, and infirmity will be entirely

eliminated. What light does the doctrine of original sin give you on this assumption?

2. Read the poem, "God in the Night," by Father A. Ryan.

3. The poem, "The Hound of Heaven," by Francis Thompson will give you a deep insight into life, if you will study it.

4. What methods does the Church employ to aid the old and infirm?

5. Discuss the meaning of verse 5, chapter III, of the Book of Wisdom and then memorize the verse.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### A FUTURE LIFE AND IMMORTALITY

**THE CATHOLIC TEACH-ING** In his Epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul says: "We have not here a lasting city, but we look for one that is to come" (Heb. XIII, 14).

This sentence gives a classic answer to a question that has always occupied the attention of serious men and women: "Is there, or is there not, a life beyond the grave?"

Sacred Scripture tells us that "God formed man of the slime of the earth and breathed into his face a living soul" (Genesis II, 7). We know that this "slime", or body, returns to the earth at death, but the "living soul" which God created for each individual body will pass into another life. "The dust [will] return to the earth from whence it was, and the spirit to God who gave it" (Ecc. XII, 7).

This future life will be an endless, conscious existence with God. It will be a personal immortality. For the blessed, it will consist in the Beatific Vision of God. There will be activity there; the blessed will have glorified bodies. "It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body" (I Cor. XV, 44).



The soul can live on after death and be one day reunited to the body, because the soul is spiritual. It can live on and retain its faculties until it is reunited to a new and immortal tabernacle.

**REASONS FOR THIS TEACH-  
ING** (a) Christ's words and actions were based on the assumption of a life to come. "I go to prepare a place for you . . . I will come again, and will take you to Myself; that where I am, you also may be" (Jn. XIV, 2-3).

Christ is God; He came from eternity; He knew what life is beyond the grave; He proved Himself worthy of our entire trust. Far better, then, is it for us to rely upon Him than upon unbelievers, who have nothing else but their own assertions to support them when they say there is no life beyond the grave.

(b) Mankind has always professed a belief in immortality. In ancient Egypt, China, and Greece this universal belief found reception in the people's hearts, The American Indian had his own ideas of a "Happy Hunting Ground."

(c) Man's restlessness here below, his continual striving after happiness, betoken a longing for immortality. "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and restless are our hearts until they rest in Thee," says St. Augustine, who had vainly tried many substitutes.

"All of man's aspirations are toward the infinite that oppresses him. He loathes his prison—the earth.

So too does he dream in mountain solitudes, looking up from vale to peak and peak to cloud; happy in the thought that some day he may go thither; unhappy in the reflection that his sojourning is prolonged. He is an imprisoned immortal. He is created for the infinite, but not permitted to seek his place as yet. Meanwhile let him dream and aspire, for that is good and reminds him that we have not here a lasting habitation" (Sheehan, "Under the Cedars and the Stars").

(d) Man's longing to see justice done, right vindicated, and goodness finally triumphant, is another reason for belief in a future life. Your own experience tells you that that desire cannot be fully satisfied in this life. There must be some place where matters are settled in a definite and satisfactory manner. Rousseau cannot be said to have had any leaning toward Catholic belief, and yet he declared: "Though I had no other proof of the immortality of the soul than the triumph of the wicked and the oppression of the just, this alone would prevent me from doubting it. So great and so painful a contrast makes me say, 'All does not end here below; order will appear after death.'" Indeed, without a day of final retribution, life would be a meaningless and insoluble riddle.

(e) If men did not believe in another life, they would not know how to regulate life here on earth. Someone recently said: "Men cannot be sane in the daylight [this life] until the night [the hereafter] be-

comes knowable." Christ makes it knowable for His followers.

(f) If some assert that science cannot prove the existence of an immortal soul which survives the body, we need not be concerned thereat, for science is out of its field when it attempts to deal with the soul. "In the matter of a future life, I would no more think of going to a scientist than I would to a banker or a politician" (Dr. C. S. Gager, biologist and botanist, in the *Catholic World*, March, 1926, p. 835). Science deals with the physical world, with material phenomena. The soul is spiritual and immaterial, and therefore cannot be studied under the microscope. Sectioning brains will not bring a solution of man's higher longings. Other methods have to be employed. Moreover, science cannot prove that the soul does not live on after death.

**DENIALS**            There are always to be found a few  
**DO NOT**            who deny immortality. "It is the  
**MAR THE**           idea of a future life as dominating  
**TRUTH**            this one against which we war."

*These* are the words of a group of unbelievers (23). Despite the fact that they can offer no proof for their statements, they often deceive the unwary. When you are old, no one will remember what those individuals said, but millions will still believe in immortality. When a scientist steps out of his

field and denies immortality, no sane person will take him seriously.

Not everyone who picks up a horn can give us music. Do not be frightened by those who make a great deal of noise. Seek out the musician if you love harmony. For every infidel who shouts, you can find thousands who can draw out of life the real harmony that is there.

### APPLICA- TIONS

1. What does the word immortality mean? Why has belief in immortality always existed among the learned as well as among the ignorant?

2. What analogy for the resurrection of our bodies can be found in the decay of a seed in the ground? Why does the Church forbid cremation?

3. Toward the end of his life, Herbert Spencer, an eminent man of science of the last century, declared to Mr. Gasquet, a devout Catholic friend: "I would give everything I have and am to have your Faith." Does that give you an insight into how much men lose who have not the Faith? (24). What effect does your belief in immortality have on your conduct?

## CHAPTER XXX

### SUMMING UP AND LOOKING FORWARD

**BELIEF**      You know that there are two classes of truths in your religion: dogmatic truths, which refer to things that you must believe, and moral truths, which refer to things that you must do. So far in this course, we have considered mainly dogmatic truths. We treated in succession the existence of God, Revelation, and the Messenger of Revelation. Then we studied the means that Christ used to guard the truths that He had given—His placing of them in the custody of the Church, and His making the Church a guide for all who would accept His truths. We saw the beginning, the trials, and the rapid march of Christ's followers through the centuries. They could be seen rising from battle after battle, humanly scarred, but always divinely intact. We saw how the leaders of Christ's army, despite certain weaknesses, withstood the terrible ordeal of nineteen centuries, and then we viewed them on the parapets of the twentieth century, still clinging to what Christ taught, still speaking clearly and with certainty on the great moral questions of life. We noted that this Church clearly defines the Scriptures with an infallible voice, that she

explains the miraculous, that she avoids the extremes of wild-eyed and loud-voiced radicals, that she shows the true dignity of man to consist in his immortal soul, that she stands for God's interest in creatures, and that, finally by making her children heirs of Heaven in Baptism, she starts them on the way to a happy future, an eternal life.

All of that is dogma. Primarily, dogma tells you what to believe; it informs your mind; it generates convictions; it supplies the foundation on which you can build a personal love of Christ.

**ACTION  
SHOULD  
FOLLOW  
BELIEF**

Mere belief, however, does not designate you as a true follower of Christ. Belief must be expressed in action. Knowledge must issue in virtue.

When you are alone sometime, think over these two texts—one from Our Lord: "If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them" (Jn. XIII, 17); and the other from St. Paul: "The doers of the law shall be justified" (Rom. II, 13).

It must now be evident to you that the purpose of all Christian knowledge is to influence action. Your belief tells you that Christ wished His followers to be honest, pure, kind-hearted, and prayerful; hence, your aim should be to develop into honest, pure, kind-hearted, and prayerful Christians.

The problem before you is how to work these beliefs



into your daily life. As a beginning, spend some time on the Eight Beatitudes; then write them out in your own words, and for a month at a time check up on a certain Beatitude and see how you put it into practice. Your conscience alone can tell you whether or not you have made an effort to live up to some of Christ's ideas.

**A MOTHER TO GUIDE YOU** The remainder of our course will be spent in trying to determine how the knowledge acquired may enable you to "serve God with a perfect heart and to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord." It is a grand thing for every boy and girl to realize that God has entrusted him or her with a soul. A grave responsibility has been placed upon you. And no one is insignificant, no matter what his or her talents or environment may be. Each should feel that he has a personal duty to fulfil towards God.

Christ came to show you how to fulfil your obligations towards God. Christ alone is the Director of your destiny, He alone can "bring you out" to your full spiritual stature. But Christ understood that boys and girls need a guide to bring them to Him. He understood the ease with which young people may take the wrong path in life. Therefore He established the Church to point the way and to aid you in following Him.

It is not a vain boast to say that the Catholic Church

has a marvelous history. She has wrought a wondrous change in thousands of young lives. There is something about her that enables her to draw out of most individuals all their spiritual possibilities. She can do this because Christ works with her and in her. For instance, you have seen saintly mothers, noble fathers, self-sacrificing priests and nuns, clean-living sons and daughters. You have seen them at Mass in all sorts of weather; you have seen them patient in bearing trials and sorrows; and you have seen others give up sin, once they understood the claims of Christ upon them. But all of that is useless for you, unless you make an effort to do as they did. The Church is here to aid you in following in the footsteps of Christ. She brings Him to you in an authentic and a real way; she seeks to build up in you a personal friendship with Him. She is your spiritual mother.

In every century, the Church is challenged to see whether or not she can bring forth sterling men and women. What will be the final verdict here in America? That depends on the extent to which you grasp the truth that the Church represents Christ, and that in being loyal to the Church, you are "putting on Christ."

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. What would be your answer if someone told you that he did not take any thought about any creed, but lived a good life?

2. After the birth of Christ, when a number of unusual things were taking place in the life of the Blessed Virgin, we read that she "kept all these words, *pondering* them in her heart" (Lu. II, 19). Do you not think that she developed a deep appreciation of God's ways by thus meditating?

3. What is the "Golden Rule," and who originated it? What do you understand by friendship with Christ?

## CHAPTER XXXI

### PRACTICING INDIVIDUALLY WHAT THE CHURCH PROFESSES

#### THE COR- RECT POINT OF VIEW

We stated in the last chapter that Christ is the Director of your destiny. But Christ wishes that you should be correctly informed as to what He expects of you. He also wishes that there be a personal contact between Him and yourself. For this reason, He established the Church. The Church is His representative, who brings Him to you. It is altogether a false view which holds that each boy and girl should struggle along independently of any "creed" and should find his or her own personal relations with Christ. Along the pathways of life are miserable wrecks who maintain that they followed their own private inspirations from God. As we look back in history, we see that only those, who were humble enough to accept Christ's directions, achieved real success.

#### THE AIM OF THE CHURCH

The Church's whole aim is the salvation of your soul; she tries to aid you to attain to God. Therefore, she has taken the principles of Christ and put them into a form that you can understand. Her

organizations, her schools, her churches, her ceremonies, her laws, her Creed are all intended to make Christ a real factor in your life.

The point for you to realize is that the Church is for you individually. This means that the responsibility of working out Christ's principles is upon you. The Church is an agency to help you work them into your life. An individual may sometimes feel that he is not obliged by a rule of the Church. He may feel that the rule is for others, but not for him. This is a sad mistake. Or again, he may feel that because someone else is not working out a principle of Christ or following a rule of the Church, he, likewise, is not obliged to follow it. That is another serious mistake.

No one can get you into God's presence if you yourself do not put forth an effort. No one can develop for you an appreciation of the Catholic Faith; you have to develop your own appreciation of it, with the aid of God's grace.

Is it not a wonderful thought that God has entrusted you with a soul; that the Church entrusts you with the Sacraments? She is the agency appointed to work with you individually. But no matter what she does for others, she will not be successful with you, unless you take to heart what she says.

## THE DIFFICULTY

You have met many persons who do not practice what they preach. Perhaps you have known some Catholics

who seemed to have missed the correct way of looking at their religion.

Now, you know that a great deal of happiness comes not only to old people, but also to young people, if they but acquire the right way of looking at things. The difficulty that you will have to overcome is the indifference of some people; and beyond that, the harder problem, of working into your individual life the principles for which the Church stands.

## POINTS TO SETTLE

- (a) Keeping the **Faith**
- (b) Judging life
- (c) Companions
- (d) Personal love **for**  
Christ
- (e) Studies
- (f) Priesthood, brother-  
hood, or sisterhood
- (g) Marriage
- (h) Business methods
- (i) Law of charity
- (j) Raising the stand-  
ards of home life

## ANSWER OF THE CHURCH

- (a) Sacraments, prayer,  
cautions.
- (b) God rules the world;  
He rewards good;  
punishes evil.
- (c) Reverent, moral,  
helpful.
- (d) Reflection, reading,  
prayer, visits to  
Our Lord, Sacra-  
ments.
- (e) Plan, energy, perse-  
verance.
- (f) God, you, and your  
confessor.
- (g) A sacred calling  
with high respon-  
sibilities.
- (h) Observe the ethics  
of the profession  
which you choose  
as a life work.
- (i) Service to others.  
Dwell on the good  
in men, not on  
their faults.
- (j) Based on the Holy  
Family. Christ  
and Children are  
the center.



*To the outsider, you are an interpreter of the Catholic Church.* What he sees you practicing is what the Church teaches and commands—at least so he usually concludes. Realize, therefore, that you are the representative of the Church and of Christ, and that the Church is judged by what you do.

(a) If non-Catholics notice that you go to church regularly, and yet they know that you accept bribes in business, or that you lead an immoral life, they may conclude that all Catholics are hypocrites.

(b) The Church maintains that she has a high respect for Christ and a profound reverence for all that pertains to Him. If you, personally, lack respect for Christ's name, if cursing is your habit, what will non-Catholics think of the Church and of your respect for Christ?

(c) When all the world knows that the Church forbids divorce, or marriage before a minister or a justice of the peace, do you not see what grave scandal is caused by your disobedience to these laws?

(d) The Church maintains that she can teach men self-control, in so far as that is possible to weak human nature. What impression, then, is made by intemperance in any form among students and others? Christ sanctified your body by His presence. Would you desecrate it?

(e) The Church tamed the ferocity of the barbarians. If your treatment of your parents, or of others who should be dear to you, is hard and brutal, how

will you be classed by men and women of refinement?

(f) A person's conversation is an index to his character and thoughts. Clean conversation makes a pleasing impression. Charitable conversation ennobles a boy or a girl. It makes life more livable for all. We can hardly conceive of the Blessed Virgin Mary as a gossip, or as one who tore reputations to pieces with her tongue. At present you all desire to be lifelong, faithful friends of Christ. That privilege comes to those who recognize their responsibility to present the true Catholicism before their acquaintances; it comes to those who bow their head in earnest prayer; it comes to those who daily spend some time in reflection.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. What was Christ's attitude toward those who boasted of their virtues, but failed to practice them?
2. Outline the sources from which it is easy to obtain a wrong standard of what is allowed or not allowed. Would you turn down a friend or a relative who thought he was doing you a favor, but in reality was opening the way to a bad habit or creating a dangerous environment?
3. Do you agree with the following? "I am a convert to the Church, and I have found from experience that argument does not make non-Catholics, Catholics; it tells very little in conversion. What counts more than anything else is example. The example of a life

led by a good Catholic man, and particularly a good Catholic woman, performs wonders, almost miracles." Another convert said: "My real stumbling-block was the indifference or bad example of Catholics" (*Ave Maria*, May 1, 1926). Think that over.

4. Is it too much to say that by gossiping you might become a "character assassin"?

5. Look up the moral virtues in your Catechism. On what occasions should you especially seek to put them into practice?

6. Work out on the board the social effects in your community of the Commandments of the Church.

7. Why are you held to restitution in case of theft, of slander, of injury to another's reputation?

## CHAPTER XXXII

### ENTERING INTO PARISH LIFE

#### YOUR PARISH

You most likely grew up as a member of some parish. You became attached to the buildings, the services that took place therein, and to the people of the parish, the sisters, the priests, etc. It seems natural, therefore, that when you set out for yourself in life, you should have a parish around which to build your public spiritual life. Catholics should profess Christ publicly. Your parish enables you to do this. It is the center of your public religious activities.

The Catholic religion is not merely a matter of belief; it is a life to be lived by bearing witness to the principles of Christ. And this life can be lived by simply entering into the ordinary duties of parish life. Your first step in practicing what Christ wishes is to find in your parish those occasions, which come up daily, for putting into effect the works of mercy. Parish services, parish devotions, are opportunities to bear witness to Christ.

Our Lord expects that those who have had more of the advantages of rearing and education and travel should take upon their shoulders more of the burdens

of parish activities. "Pushers" are needed, men and women with the spirit of self-sacrifice, boys and girls with unselfish zeal. Christ expects you to give to the timid an example of public devotion to His Name. Attachment to Christ is shown by activity in your parish.

## **THE PARISH BUILD- INGS**

Each Catholic church is sanctified by the presence of Jesus Christ. To honor Him, architecture has contributed its best. As you grow older, try to understand the ideas expressed in various styles of architecture. Through painting and sculpture, the mind is elevated to the spiritual truths portrayed in colors and form. Allow the paintings and the stained glass windows in your church to impress their lessons upon you. Let the thought that your parish church is the House of God expand and grow with you. If you would acquire the habit of dropping into the church frequently to visit Christ, a sense of awe and respect and appreciation would gradually grow upon you.

Some day you might do something to make the church more beautiful for Christ. During the month of May, why cannot both boys and girls bring flowers for Mary's honor? Likewise, you might help the parish school by donations of books, by visiting the school now and then, and by helping to organize programmes. Loyalty to our Lord is the idea behind it all.

**DIVINE  
SERVICES**

You can and should pray at home. But God has decided that the human race should also render external homage to Him. For that reason, He instituted sacrifices, by which people might publicly adore Him, thank Him, petition Him, and make atonement to Him for their sins.

The Mass is a sacrifice. By attending it, you fulfill your fourfold duty to your Creator. The Mass is also a memorial of what Christ did for you. If you would begin now, and for a few years study the meaning of the Mass, the prayers of the Ordinary and the different Epistles and Gospels, you would see that there is sacrifice, the divine Word of God, mystery, prayer, history, poetry and symbolism in the Mass. To appreciate all that is wrapped up in the Mass, requires prayer, reflection, and attentive participation. Reflect on the movements of the priest, recall to your mind the Last Supper, where the Mass and the priesthood were instituted. Then meditate upon the power of those simple words of the priest at which Christ comes down from Heaven to continue His work among men. Finally, to participate fully in the Sacrifice, communicate as often as you can. Communion is the Food of the soul, it builds up within you appreciations that will serve you in good stead in Heaven. Communion is the actual partaking of the Victim of the Sacrifice. It is a coming into contact with the most important factor in Christ-building, namely Christ Himself.



You like to introduce your friends to one another. If you have friends who have not been put in touch with Christ, why not bring them to Mass—to make them acquainted with Christ, to explain the Mass to them, to show them the necessity of reading about Christ? At the Mass Christ blesses them, atones for them, prays for them. When people see you thus interested in Christ and in the spiritual activities of your parish, they sometimes conclude that they ought to better their own lives, that they too ought to make Christ better known among men. (Consult “My Changeless Friend,” by Father Le Buffe, S. J., Second Series, Chap. 5.)

Whatever talent you possess should be employed for the betterment of divine services. If you were asked to sing in the choir, would it not be a privilege thus to show your love for Christ?

## PARISH SOCI- ETIES

Parish societies are successful when energetic and zealous groups of people band themselves together for a definite purpose. The Holy Name Society should have the boys on its roster. The girls should be members of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin or of the Rosary Society, or of the Altar Society. The St. Vincent de Paul Society will claim those who have the spirit of service for the poor; but if you join, be sure to persevere. In city parishes, where there is

a Big Brother or a Big Sister group, see if you can do something to help their work.

You need not be active in all societies, but attachment to Our Lord should urge you to give some of your time to furthering the aims of one of the societies organized in your particular parish. Try to see to it that, in some of the societies, there are committees of men and women for the purpose of welcoming strangers into the parish. (Look up Matt. XXV, 34-46 if you wish to know the reason.) A few in each parish should be taught how to spend their time with groups of children, to organize their games, to associate with them, to promote healthful outdoor activities. Those who are more fortunate financially and socially in life are not thereby more spiritual or more religious, unless they give some of their time and energy to those who are less fortunate.

## **PARISH SUPPORT**

Here in the United States, church support depends on the generosity of the faithful. Generosity does not consist in the giving of money alone; it should include generally the giving of time, advice, talents. When you settle in a parish, report to the pastor. Accept the opportunities that are thrown in your way to help out in various duties, using prudence, of course, lest some of the unwilling ones over-load you. Try to see that others also do their share, but remember that inactivity on their part is no excuse for

you to flee from work. In some cases, parish support might mean the teaching of the Catechism, or the reclaiming of fallen-away members, or taking care of the church, or the arrangement of programmes. Do not be surprised if someone hurt your feelings now and then. Do not quit merely because misunderstandings arise. You need the Church far more than the Church needs you. Be prudent, tactful, and not too touchy. There usually are difficulties to be overcome in working for a good cause.

If you are blessed with financial success, you should look upon your wealth as an opportunity of doing good. In that case, give not only what is an ordinary man's share, but from time to time make it possible for the less fortunate to earn something, so that they, too, might give. It is in giving with the right motive that you become truly spiritual. When you are established in your life work, be good to those who are leading lives of sacrifice for Catholic education and charities.

**APPLICA-** 1. Christ "went about doing good."  
**TIONS** What does that mean in parish life?

Make it a practice to follow attentively each Sunday the reading of the Gospel, so that Christ may become real to you.

2. What is meant by saying that every Catholic church is an "Upper Room" or a "Calvary"?

3. When you shirk parish duties, whom do you injure?

4. The Mass is an action. The people (if they have studied their prayer-books) know what the priest is doing at each moment. You see, then, that though the language of the Mass is Latin, this makes no difference, because it is a knowledge of the action that is important.

5. Study the meaning of this sentence: "Public worship is the primary and indispensable source of the true Christian spirit, and the faithful will be filled with this spirit only in proportion as they actively participate in the sacred mysteries and in the public and solemn prayer of the Church" (Pope Pius X, *Motu Proprio*, 1903) (20-a). Does not this show that the Mass should hold first place in your life? How does the Mass enable you to fulfill your fourfold duty to God? If you never showed an external mark of respect to your mother or father, how would you be judged? If God is your Father, should not some external mark of respect be shown to Him? How is the Mass a public act of worship?

6. Is the saving of your soul your only duty in life?

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### SOCIAL SERVICE

**MEANING**     The practical application of the idea that each individual should be interested in the welfare of his neighbor, whether he be a friend or a stranger, white or black, a Christian or a non-Christian, is a distinct contribution of Christ's religion to mankind. The deeper you penetrate into His life, the more will you understand the high value that Christ placed on service to one's fellowmen. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. XV, 13). Christ Himself gave the example. If you have His spirit, you will desire to help others.

Up to this period of your life, most likely, you have depended largely on the resources of your parents. They have spent long years protecting and caring for you. You are also heavily indebted to teachers, relatives, and friends. Has not the time arrived for you to do something for your community, in return for what has been done for you?

Social service means the giving of some of your surplus time, energy, talent, wealth to the grand task of enabling men to live as God intended them to live.

Social service is not limited to the confines of your parish. It includes every effort that you make to better the lot of mankind here below. Some may think that social service means the giving of money or clothes to the poor. You should have a broader viewpoint. The poor do, indeed, need help; but frequently the rich have need of enlightenment on the real purpose of life, on how to live rightly. Social service includes every effort you make to enable people to stand on their own feet. It means putting your religion into practice whenever you find occasion. It means not only the effort to make a living, but also to "help forward the great enterprises of the human spirit."

## PRINCIPLES

(a) The motive of Catholic social service is "In His Name," and, hence is supernatural. You do not help others merely to be "a good fellow," but you see the soul in each individual, be he rich or poor; you see the eternal destiny to which he or she has been called.

(b) The works of mercy are *obligatory, not optional*. "He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not?" (1 John IV, 20). "This obligation varies in proportion to the urgency of our neighbor's needs and our own ability to help him. No one, of course, can devote himself to all the works of mercy."

What affects your life may also affect others. If the milkman were to deliver bad milk and your little



sister were to die as a result, would you not do something for a pure milk supply? Yet, why not be interested now in such conditions?

And just as you would condemn the milkman, so too would condemnation come to you for leading others into sin and thus killing the life of the soul. It is a noble social service to set a good example of clean conversation and decent behavior.

Therefore, do your part, as best you can. The spiritual works refer not only to the soul and its needs, but to the faculties of man, such as his will and his intellect. It is a work of mercy to enable boys and girls to go to school. If you work unselfishly for pure food laws, for good housing conditions, for the checking of diseases arising from improper working conditions, you are thus preventing illness and fulfilling the spirit of the precept, "Visit the sick." You recall that you admired the boy or girl who "divided up" with playmates. Should you not follow that principle to some extent as an adult.

You may have been of the opinion that the works of mercy merely had to be memorized; but the fact is that *you will be judged on how you perform them*. Start now to practice, one at a time, the works of mercy, until you grasp their full meaning.

(c) There must be organization and "teamwork" in our day, and also restraint of selfish and mean motives. The conditions of modern life are too complex for any one person to handle. What the individ-

ual can do in establishing a living wage, for instance, is extremely limited. Such work, to be effective, must be done through organization. You must learn to work in union with others. You must learn how not to encourage laziness or indolence in those whom you are helping. The undeserving will attempt to live upon various organizations, now on this one, and then on that. Unless you have system, you will not be able to expose these "fakers" and to save your help for the deserving poor.

(d) "The strong shall help the weak." Those who have more of material goods, or intelligence, or judgment, or God's graces, shall share with those less fortunate, and use their strength or abundance to relieve and help their neighbor. You will frequently hear the remark: "Let her do it; let him do it." Such remarks are not Christian, but usually come from selfish persons who could help if they but wished.

Each one can give something, though it may be only a helpful word or smile. "No one is required to do everything for the poor, but everyone is required to do something. There are humble and simple tasks that remain forever noble and forever necessary in serving the poor. The happy face of a little child to whom one gives its first toy, lights the heavens as perhaps no thinking can light them and honors the benefactor more than his philosophy" (25).

In each city there are a number of young women who have time and means to aid others. Are you not

all interested in children? If there is a baby-home organization under Catholic auspices, could you not do something to aid it? Give something to an organization that will make the needy happier. Maurice Francis Egan had always been kind and thoughtful. He must have found it worth while, for at the end of his life he said: "I can never forgive myself for not having been keener to discover means of helping others" (26). Use your talent for bringing happiness into the lives of others. Others have helped you, now give back some of that help to society.

**CONDI-  
TIONS  
WHICH  
REQUIRE  
ATTEN-  
TION**

Ours is an age of crowded cities, with unstable employment, wretched housing conditions, numerous moral delinquencies, and, resulting from it all, poverty. Ours is a machine age in which the individuality of the worker is almost crushed, leaving him dejected and uninterested. Ours is an age when many abuse their health by living in an unnatural manner. Consequently, the whole force of your energy must be thrown, whenever possible, into the movement for coöperation between capital and labor, for the betterment of the unreasonable working conditions of women and the abolition of unnecessary child labor, for the preservation of the health of the rising generation, more respect for law and order, cleaner politics, getting men of character into public offices, etc. Dr.

J. A. Ryan has said: "There can be no question but that the wage earner has a right to a minimum standard of length of working days, of safety and sanitation in working places, and reasonable measures of security in the form of social insurance against hardships and sickness, accidents, old age, unemployment."

Some find themselves confined to uninteresting mechanical jobs in a factory; others have to spend long hours at tedious office work. In order that the spirit of the individual laborer be not crushed, he should seek to spend some of his free time in the upkeep of a home garden and in outdoor activities such as swimming, boating, or walking in the country, and so forth. He should help in rescue work or work with the "Big Brothers," or join the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He should cultivate the habit of reading and supervising the reading and play of his children. He should make little things for his own home.

Such activities relieve his mind and give an outlet to his instinct to do things in a personal way. They enable him to recreate himself rather than be forced to patronize commercialized amusements.

You should be prepared to see to it that the State renders justice to every class; that the poor man has as much chance before the courts as the wealthy. Your talents are needed to prevent the national government from taking over duties that should be fulfilled by the individual State or the parent. You should seek to raise the standard of family life, but at the same time

be careful not to remove from the parent the sense of responsibility for the upbringing of children. It is a Christian principle that responsibility rests on the parents; the State may not make the child, or the parent, a mere creature of its whims. The child belongs primarily to the parents, not to the State.

You might do something to foster a community spirit that condemns filth on the stage and in print. Create a demand for the good, the noble, the true.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. The previous lesson referred to activities within your parish. Social service is broader. As an American and as a Catholic, you should be prepared anywhere and everywhere to join with those who are seeking to make this country a fit place to live in, so that each man and woman, each boy and girl, may have an opportunity to become the self-reliant, yet self-controlled individual that God intended—knowing God and His truth, and loving Him.

2. The burden of making a living crushes many nowadays. Religion has been removed from countless lives. Help your neighbor to realize that he is worth while in the sight of God. Do this without offence to him. "Social service is effective assistance rendered to the weak by the strong, in an intelligent, sympathetic, and adequate manner. This assistance is given, not as the strong wish it nor as they enjoy the doing of it, but as the weak have need of it and as



they may profit by it in the fullest manner" (27).

3. One man has said that a result of our industrial civilization is the "mechanization of men. The system implies, for the vast majority, either routinized attendance upon a machine or else routinized obedience to superiors. The trend of organization is toward the elimination of thought and discretion from the duties of the largest possible proportion of the personnel. Thus, the situation becomes unfavorable to the exercise of the powers that are most distinctly human—analysis, appreciation, choice, reflective co-operation" (28). Study how to overcome those dangers to your manhood.

4. Who first said: "Am I my brother's keeper?" Why is such an attitude condemned? Look up the work of Bishop von Ketteler among the laboring classes in Europe.

5. Make a list of the Catholic agencies that do social work in this country. If you did not know whom to help in later life, what would you do?

6. Write on the blackboard a practical application for each one of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

**A CATHOLIC PRINCIPLE**      Participation in parish affairs will generate in a boy or girl the habit of helping others and of looking out for the interests of Christ. As you grow older, this habit ought to expand into the broader one of social service, which will urge you to aid in bettering the conditions under which people, in general, live. Parish work and social service well done prepare for still larger tasks, some of which are world-wide, *e. g.*, the preservation of peace among the nations. You will not be very old before you will find that there are hatreds among men. Even in this country there are individuals who despise people of other racial stock. With the knowledge of your religion you ought to be able to understand what spreads hatred and what should draw men together. Too much talk about "Nationalism" has caused men of one nation to despise those of another. But your religion tells you that all men have souls and were brought into existence by the same loving Father. And the truths of the Redemption have taught you that *all men are brothers in*

*Christ.* That is a Catholic principle, namely, the principle of universal brotherhood.

The Church has always taught that every man has a spiritual soul, that all are intended for the Beatific Vision of God, and that Jesus Christ died to redeem all without exception. It follows that since Christ died for all men, you, as His followers, ought to spread among men the knowledge of their relationship to Christ. You ought to bring them to Christ.

But in order to convince men that Heaven is the reward for all those who prove themselves worthy, you must first treat them as brothers. St. Paul, one of the first true internationalists, said: "There is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal. III, 28). To-day you might say that, as far as God's interests go, there is neither German nor Irish, Italian nor Polish, Yankee nor Swede, foreigner nor native, but all are sons of God.

There is a new feast in the Church, that of the "*Kingship of Christ over all nations.*" Christ is the King of men's hearts. All races, all classes must receive their interpretation of life from Him. He supplies the strength whence is to come the moral regeneration of the world.

## ACCEPT- ING GUID- ANCE

(a) The principle of universal brotherhood should influence you in the attitude that you assume toward

**FROM  
THIS  
PRIN-  
CIPLE**

others. It should prevent you from looking down upon any race or creed. No matter how low the individual, no matter what tongue he speaks, no matter what color he is, no matter what country he claims as his own, you should see in him a human being who has been redeemed by Christ. Since all have spiritual souls, you see the reason why you should "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Lu. VI, 31, 36).

(b) At one time, despite its jealousies, Christian Europe possessed an international outlook and a unity of view that, to a considerable extent, restrained hatred among men. This unity of outlook was broken in the sixteenth century, and since then the people of each nation have been intent on their own national ideals, their own heroes and customs, to the exclusion of "foreigners." The industrial and political progress of the eighteenth century fostered Nationalism; and racial hatred thus grew more bitter. The products, the literature, the people of one nation were considered to be of superior quality to those of other nations. Even we Americans are known abroad as boasters.

As long as you consider yourself superior to others, you are not in a position to help soften racial hatreds. Christ died to unite all men: "That they all may be one, Father, as Thou in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us" (Jn. XVII, 21). You must take your part in bringing the world to a united view-

point on the meaning of life. And to do so, you must aid in the movement that seeks to keep racial hatreds from flaring up and thus causing strife among nations.

We cannot foresee the future, but modern life seems to be drawing men more closely together. What is now needed is leaders to convince all men that they were meant to be one in Christ. The foundation for such unity will depend on the number of individuals who can be taught to treat all men alike, to be fair to black and white, and to ignore class distinctions. If you have occasion to serve conspicuously in the larger movements of internationalism, well and good; otherwise try to do your "bit" in removing the class hatreds and religious prejudices that exist among the members of your community.

(c) World peace depends on the idea of universal brotherhood. "As Catholics, as brothers of the Prince of Peace, and as Americans, we have the spiritual responsibility of promoting peace, not only in our own country, *but throughout the world.*" Before a League of Nations becomes possible, men's hearts must be changed. This is the task in which you may, and should, aid. Bringing men nearer to Christ will change their hearts.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. What is your attitude toward the motto: "Our country, may she always be right; but our country, right or wrong?"

2. On what occasions are you bound by the laws of charity?

3. Christian internationalism is not identical with Communistic internationalism. Why not?

4. Can patriotism replace religion?

## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE LAITY, A LIGHT TO THOSE IN DARKNESS

**VARIOUS**      The world has never been without  
**KINDS OF**      good men and women; but their abil-  
**DARK-**          ity to do good has varied. There have  
**NESS**          been many who fought in darkness.

(a) You will learn of men and women of high renown who struggled many years for the betterment of the world; but, as life's battle neared its completion, they sometimes developed bitterness and pessimism. They had relied solely on their natural powers, and after experiencing the meanness of the world, they knew not where to turn for light and comfort. What a difference it would have made in their lives had they known the truth of life, had they been elevated by faith in Christ! Study the last days of a saint.

(b) There are also good people who have distorted viewpoints. They consider themselves zealous and full of light. Some of them are so filled with light that they believe the world would be all right if all Catholics were removed. Such people deserve pity, not hatred. They forget Christ's prophecy that, on the last day, some will say: "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name and cast out devils in Thy Name?" And the reply will be: "I never knew you"



(Mt. VII, 22). We know not if the reason for such a condemnation be the self-righteousness of some, or the fact that their "flaring enthusiasm was the smoke of egotistical self-deceit." At any rate, such a type seems to be in darkness as to the real "way." Try to change them by kindness.

(c) There are others who make no effort to better life. "What's the use?" they say. "The world cannot be changed. Why should we worry?" This is the darkness of indifference; and it is a sad state, for God requires an effort from all. Such men have never been warmed by the light of Christ's truths. They lack inspiration. Ask them to study the life of St. Vincent de Paul, or of St. Francis of Assisi.

**THE  
TRUTH  
WILL  
SHINE**

There was something about Christ that drew fair-minded people to Him. The Gospels frequently state that the multitudes "were in admiration at His doctrine" (Mk. VI, 2). Christ was truth itself. He was light to those seeking the truth, and He could stir up the indifferent to a strenuous effort.

Note the change that came over St. Paul when he learned the truth. Also study the change in St. Augustine's life after his conversion.

In our own day, too, the truth can make itself felt. Men are quite accurate in judging just how far a Catholic feels the truth of his religious convictions. In

proportion as you "put on Christ," truth-seeking people will wonder at the secret influence that is changing your life, and they will seek an explanation of it. They will soon perceive how deeply the truths of Christ have penetrated into your character. A man once said to St. Francis de Sales: "It is enough for men to see you in the pulpit. Your heart speaks to them by your countenance, and by your eyes, were you only to say the 'Our Father' with them. The most common words in your mouth, burning with the fire of charity, pierce and melt all hearts."

The moon shines by the reflected light of the sun. Those who work at night may never see the sun; but only its reflected light on the moon. The closer you draw to Christ, the more will you reflect His light. And those sitting in darkness, who have never heard a real explanation of Christ, when they see Him reflected in your life, may come to a knowledge of the real Light. Christ's desire was to be a Light to all men. Part of His plan was that men should see the truth reflected in your conduct and thus be converted to Him. The misguided also will take notice; perhaps they will change their lives if they see Christ's principles shining in your life.

**WHERE  
THE  
LIGHT IS  
NEEDED**

You do not possess all scientific truth. Others may know more about science than you do. Nor have you all political truth. You cannot give

a full explanation for every event in life. But you have the one thing necessary, and that is the key to the true meaning of life. You know the "why" and "wherefore" of man's existence. And these are the questions on which people most need the light.

The man who says religion is unnecessary needs light; he who makes wealth his goal needs light as well as he who lives a sensual life. The man who suffers much and who cannot get ahead, also needs light. Even the self-righteous, who imagine themselves the only examples of true Americanism, need light. The reflected light of your example is needed to check divorce, to defend the purity of family life, to expose the evil behind the pagan practice of birth control, and to build up reverence for the rights and possessions of others.

The principal contribution you can make to American life will be in the form of lives that are ruled by Christ's ideas, lives of peace and contentment. When you live like that, the conditions around you will begin to be handled by Christ's principles. Learn how to take life, how to be loyal, how to start at the bottom and work up patiently. Most failures in life are due to wrong attitudes that the individual assumes; they are due to inability to get along with other people. So the main problem is not how to earn a living, but how to live the right kind of life. Avoid snobbish or lazy attitudes.

**HOW TO  
GIVE  
WHAT  
YOU  
SHOULD  
GIVE .**

We say that you should give a life to the modern world. And you may wonder how that can be done. It can be done by simply entering into the spirit of your religion, by obeying the laws of the Church, by showing people that it is Christ who inspires your life. Try to be a new creation in American life, namely, that of boys and girls developing into men and women who have imitated Christ to such an extent that people can actually see His influence on you. It would not be the first time that boys and girls reflected Christ, but it would be the first time for many to see worked out in practice the ideas for which Christ stood.

“Persons influence us, voices melt us, looks subdue us, deeds inflame us,” said Cardinal Newman. You need not boast, you need not talk a great deal. Your actions will speak; your self-denials will shine. And those in darkness will at least turn towards the light, and some of them may be drawn to it.

Scientific conclusions may change; ideas of government and education may change. But the ideas that have come to you directly from Christ do not change, because they are divine and hence always true and always new. They were given to you for your own eternal welfare and also that you might aid others to understand the purpose for which God created all men—an eternity of happiness if they will but have faith, hope, and love.

**APPLICA-  
TIONS**

1. What did Christ mean when he said: "I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth in Me may not remain in darkness" (Jn. XII, 46)?

2. What is the Catholic Evidence Guild of England?

3. Verse 13, chap. IV, of the Acts of the Apostles says: "They knew them that they had been with Jesus." Can people tell by your conduct that you have been with Jesus in Communion, in church, or in a Catholic school?

4. Does the following, spoken of the average American, show the need for Christ: "He [the average man] craves the active peace of surrender and devotion to something greater than himself. . . . The captains of industry are no longer his heroes. The remedy is, to help the average man to an understanding of his own nature. . . . It is to give him an object to which he can joyfully surrender the full strength of his body and soul" (S. P. Sherman, *Atlantic Monthly*, Nov. 1922, p. 630 sq.). Compare this appeal with the object of Benedictine life which is "Pax" (peace). (Consult Jn. XIV, 27, and XVI, 33.)

5. In his Rule for the Brothers, St. Francis of Assisi placed this injunction: "And all are to preach by their example." Is not that the best form of preaching?

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### THE VALUE OF IDEALS

**IDEALS OF YOUTH** In the first lesson, we said that life is a game. Success depends on whether or not you are willing to put forth the effort necessary to make yourself worthy of a future life with God. Deep down in their hearts, all boys and girls want to make good in this game of life. They wish to succeed here on earth; they fill their minds with visions of triumphs over evil and injustice. They likewise wish to be loyal to Christ. It is here in particular that they must realize that loyalty requires a long effort.

The world offers difficulties. Many obstacles, for instance, will be met in carrying out the ideas expressed in the last few lessons. A young person must realize two things: first, that ideals are never easy of accomplishment; second, that few people appear to live by ideals. Not every problem in life is dealt with according to the ideals of justice. Individuals appear to be absorbed in selfishness rather than love of neighbor. Dishonesty, lewdness, and indifference have many devotees. And the number who look upon religion as "nice but unnecessary" is quite large.

What, then, are you to do? You have ideals. You know that the Commandments and the Beatitudes, and



the duty of prayer all come directly from God. Yet, unless you watch yourself carefully, you will find that, slowly perhaps, the process of weaning you away from your ideals might go on within you. Even friends and relatives will suggest things to you that conflict with your ideals. Always recall that Christ Himself struggled with temptation. Imagine the fine example He gave you, as seen in these references:—Mt. IV, 1-11; XXVI, 38-44; Mk. XIV, 32-36; Lu. XXII, 42-45.

### **IDEALS ARE PRAC- TICAL**

The young person who lives by ideals may not reach the height to which he aspires, but he will get farther than the individual who thinks ideals can-

not be used. If "to be weak is to be miserable," you will find help in keeping before yourself an ideal of a sturdy, moral character. In the very fight for right, for honesty, for justice, for purity, a person strengthens himself. In a recent novel, it was said of a group of novices coming from different environments: "They struggle, and they succeed." Effort and struggle are necessary for development, but development is made easier by having ideals.

You may often feel discouraged at the manner in which people smile at the ideals which you would put into practice. Of course, your methods will change as you grow older, but in changing methods, cling to the ideal. The period will come when you will have to make a final decision whether or not you will be

absolutely honest on every occasion, persistently faithful to your family, loyal to the standards of your profession.

When this test comes, whether at sixteen, or at twenty-one, or at forty, just sit down and figure out for yourself whether you are going to take your standards of right and wrong from what people say and do, or from *what Christ expects of you*. On that decision will rest your future. Those who keep a stout determination will finally reach the peace and satisfaction that go with realized ideals. Who among the saints did not live by ideals? In university life in Paris, was not Frederick Ozanam moved by ideals? Before parliament, did not Daniel O'Connell follow an ideal? Among the presidents of our own country, could Washington have been bribed, or Lincoln won to dishonesty? All the world knew where those men stood on such questions. Thousands of mothers and fathers have found it possible, even in the midst of suffering, to maintain their standards of love, kindness, purity, unselfishness, and perseverance. It is your duty to convince men that your ideals are practical.

**SETTING** "To every man there openeth

**UP IDEALS** A way, and ways, and a way,

And the high soul climbs the high way,

And the low soul gropes the low;

And every man decideth

The way his soul shall go."

It is sad to see the plight of those who are satisfied to aim low, or who do not plan ahead how they will act in times of trial. What would you think of a general who went to war without a plan of campaign? or of a football team with no system of defense? Yet that is the case of the individual who does not set for himself a standard of conduct for certain emergencies, or even for the ordinary problems of life.

Of course, God alone knows why some fail and others succeed. But it is certain that the ideals which you now embrace, of right and honesty and unselfishness, will have a marked influence on your later life. Shocks will indeed come to you, but you need not yield to discouragement. People your imagination with noble ideals. Perhaps you may later be forced to live in an environment which will be unfavorable to those ideals. In that case, you will be able to rise above your environment and to help others, because men and women need someone to lead them upward. There are too many trying to pull them downward.

Women, especially, were made for ideals. It is their duty to encourage, to elevate, to console, to help others. A German poet calls the Blessed Virgin: "The eternal woman that leadeth us up." When God created woman, He said: "Let us make him [man] a *help* like unto himself" (Gen. II, 18). It is woman's purpose, then, to help, to ennoble, to inspire; and she cannot do this unless she be grounded in ideals of courage, unselfishness, and purity. In place of being drawn

down by those of lower ideals, she should continually lead others upward.

Christ is the Master-Artist. He alone knows the secret of how to shape oneself for eternity. He has given us the necessary directions. In following His directions, we are shaping ourselves for the life beyond. No one can enter Heaven who has not aimed for it incessantly, through tears and joys, successes and failures.

**ADJUST-  
ING YOUR  
IDEALS TO  
REALITY**

You now resolve to be of service to others; but your courage may fail. Why? Perhaps you expect too much from others; perhaps you are employing the wrong method. Your ideals may not work in the way in which you have pictured them. The thing for you to do is to cling to the ideal of service while learning to adjust yourself to the human weaknesses around you. Though others become pessimistic and say: "Oh, I tried that once," you must not become pessimistic. The reason why you have intelligence and will-power and grace from God is that you may be able to adjust yourself to the conditions that surround you. Do not think that men can be made perfect; yet we can have those who always strive after perfection. Baseball players try to bat and field 1000%, which is perfection; yet they do not quit if they maintain only 300%. That is better than the average. In your case try to do better than the

average. Make your ideals fully effective by putting them into action?

### APPLICA- TIONS

1. What does this mean: "The sweetest singers have brooded their notes in the shadow of the Musa Melancholia"?

Is it possible to smile through tears? May suffering have a purpose?

2. Discuss the following: "Now I know that true charity consists in bearing all my neighbor's defects."

3. Pope Gregory VII said: "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile." Was he a failure? Should he have ceased to love justice? "All who will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." What does that mean?

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### FORMING HABITS

#### **THE RELATION OF HABITS TO IDEALS**

Ideals are a guide to what you should strive to accomplish. When you have found the ideal way to act, you must immediately set about acting that way. Thus you will bring about a habit, which will make striving after the ideal easier.

Your religion requires you to practice certain supernatural virtues. These are not the same as natural habits. But forming good natural habits will make it more easy for supernatural acts to develop within you. At Baptism, there was given you the spiritual power of believing in and loving God. That was the basis for your present faith in and love of God.

You should have an ideal of loving God, of loving Christ. Now, if you pray for and try to develop the good natural habits, it is more likely that God will increase your graces for the development of supernatural faith and love. Each supernatural act is a gift from God, and by the right use of habits you give God a chance to draw out the supernatural possibilities within you.



Try to develop the habit of keeping before your mind a picture of the way in which Our Lord acted. That is your ideal; then ask Him to help you to act according to that ideal.

Try to understand the importance of forming correct habits. Think of the goodness of God in granting you faith. Strive for the habits that grow out of faith.

"We may form the habit of pessimism or the habit of optimism; the habit of refined or the habit of vulgar behavior. Few habits are more easily formed, or more difficult to dissolve, than the habit of superficial thinking, such as may be seen in that type of mind that reads nothing but the shallowest fiction. There is such a thing as the habitually reverent mind and the habitually wholesome mind" (29). Therefore, choose your ideal, and acquire the habit of acting according to that ideal. Wrong habits will gradually lower your ideal, until you think of and desire only low things.

## HOW TO FORM HABITS

You cannot acquire many habits at once. St. Francis de Sales strove for twenty years or more before he entirely overcame his tendency to anger.

Professor James suggests the following rules:

(a) "Make as many of your actions as possible habitual, that is, done without much effort." Getting down on your knees each night and morning ought to be habitual. It should not be necessary for you to de-

cide each evening whether or not you are going to pray. That action should naturally suggest itself to you. Do it regularly, and it *will* suggest itself. Likewise, remember that cursing may easily become an habitual or automatic action if you permit yourself to use this or that profane word repeatedly.

(b) "Permit no exception to occur in acquiring the habit until the habit be rooted." Practice saying "Good morning," to your family until that action becomes second nature to you.

(c) "Resolutions are made effective only by exercising them." Resolving to study more diligently tomorrow will not help you much. "*Do it now!*"

A tendency to do an act is ingrained only by actual repetition. "When a high resolve or a fine flow of feeling is allowed to evaporate without bearing practical fruit, it is worse than a chance lost." To dream continually of making home-runs with the bases full may make you a very weak character. Get out and practice batting.

(d) "Be systematically heroic in little unnecessary things. Do every day or two some little act that is hard, just because it is hard. Then, when the hour of trial and dire need draws nigh, it will not find you unnerved and untrained to stand the test." The more of these little acts of self-denial you store up, the more will you be able to succeed in big tests and to stand heavy shocks.

"The only way to become habitually clean and strong

and logical and reverent in your thinking and conduct is to *practice strenuously* this sort of thinking and action, and refuse the mind's hospitality to the opposite sort" (29-a). The tendency which you might feel to indulge in undesirable actions should be turned into higher channels. For instance, in place of yielding to the tendency to bully or to be selfish, at once proceed to defend the weak, or do another unselfish act. It is the immediacy of the action that develops strength.

### UPROOT- ING BAD HABITS

(a) Correct one definite fault at a time. Do not say, "I will not give way to anger." That is too broad. Neither say: "I will not yield to the tendency to express anger." Make it more definite: "From today until the end of this week, I will not make one angry retort." Always set a time limit. A bunch of sticks can hardly be broken; but if the sticks are taken singly it is easy to break them.

(b) "Win out on the first test of a determination," says James. You may unconsciously make an angry retort; but do not let that worry you. The point is, when you are conscious that you are about to break out, then do not waver, but do the right thing then and there.

(c) Be prepared calmly to battle daily. Life is a constant warfare. You must hold yourself in check always.

**APPLICA-  
TIONS**

1. The small religious duties—obedience, truthfulness, morning and evening prayers, fasting, are the best aids in developing habits that will enable you to attain your ideal. Small daily duties either break or make most men. Continual small surrenders to your lower impulses will gradually make you a slave. You may not notice the effects of little acts of meanness, or deceit, but each act makes, as it were, a groove in the mind, and into these grooves your future actions tend to run.

If you smoke a cigarette every time you want it, if you buy candy every time you long for it, then you are forming a habit that may enslave you. Learn to say "No" to your tendencies for self-satisfaction.

2. Discuss the following verse: "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive."

3. Learn by heart and discuss these lines:

"Sow a thought and you reap an act,  
Sow an act and you reap a habit,  
Sow a habit and you reap a character,  
Sow a character and you reap a destiny."

4. "The stature of the perfect man," is attained but slowly—through patience, effort, study, prayer. Be satisfied to make slow progress but be determined. When tempted, ask yourself: "What would Christ do under these circumstances?" In the instant that you resist because of attachment to Christ, you are "putting on Christ" by the very act of resisting.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### OBEDIENCE

#### THE DESIRE FOR LEADERSHIP

You recall that, as little boys, you longed to be captains on various teams, or that, as small girls, you liked to arrange parties. Even now, when you feel an ambition to help out in parish

life, or to live up to high ideals, you perhaps wish to do it in your own way. It is not easy to do things as others wish them done.

The country in which we live was intended to be a free country, where each individual might have the greatest possible freedom in developing his own talents. And when a person thinks much of developing himself, or of becoming a leader, he may become impatient with those who obstruct in any way what he considers his "liberties."

If you will ponder over this desire to be a leader, or to do things in your own way, it ought soon to become clear to you that life would be unbearable if everyone fulfilled his desire to lead, or to do just as he wished and in a manner suitable to himself alone. What would happen to a football team if one of the eleven thought that he ought to lead the team and was

unwilling to obey orders? You cannot lead all of the time; you must sometimes follow.

**OBEDI-  
ENCE A  
CONDI-  
TION OF  
LEADER-  
SHIP**

You may think it strange, but it is a fact that you must first learn to obey before you are fit to lead. A leader who himself does not obey the law of God, the laws of the land, the regulations of his school, the rightful command of his parents, or the rules of the game, is a dangerous leader, because he may put himself before God or country or school or home or friends. You know that you always mistrust selfish companions. The disobedient are selfish.

Some people naturally like to command. To take orders gets on their nerves; hence they find it hard to obey. That is just why obedience is such a great triumph in personal development. Suppose you played on the line in a football team, and the quarterback called a signal which directed you to get an opponent out of the way, so that a back-field man could come through your position. You might think such a play the wrong one to call; yet, if you did nothing to get the opponent out of the way, the play might fail for lack of discipline on your part. In preferring your judgment to that of the quarterback, you injure the whole team's chance of advancing. If that were your usual way of acting, do you think that the team would ever choose you as leader? No. They would choose



a man who had learned to obey. They would consider you too selfish. A leader must frequently forget his own wishes for the larger interests of the team, or the school, or his family, or his employers.

As you look back on your past experience, you feel thankful for every time you obeyed; it made you a better boy or girl; it gave you greater self-control; it made you more unselfish. You gained by your obedience.

This same principle of subjecting your own preferences to the ideas of someone else applies to many situations in life. You might be serving on a parish committee and think that the leader was not handling the situation correctly; still, for the sake of harmony, for the good of the cause, you would follow orders and say nothing. In doing this cheerfully and with a smile, you would prepare yourself for leadership later. You would then better understand the ideas of those under you. You would give orders in a more humane way. You would be broadminded enough to listen to the suggestion of others. Not even in America can there be all leaders and no followers. In certain things be prepared to lead; in other instances be prepared to obey, to take the word of another, to silence your own wishes.

### **GOD'S VIEW- POINT**

You like to be considered "grown up." At the age of twelve a Jewish boy was considered a "grown up" and began to learn a trade. The Gospel (Lu.

II, 51) tells us that at that age Jesus was present in the Temple. He was conscious of His divine nature and of His human right to be considered "grown up." Yet He readily obeyed a poor Jewish maiden and a foster-father who was a carpenter. The Lord of Heaven and earth submitted Himself to those two simple souls. Is not that a beautiful picture of obedience—"He was subject to them"? Think of that scene when you are tempted to consider yourself beyond the age of obedience to your parents.

God demands obedience of us. He has laid down rules, and the spirit in which we obey those rules, the spirit with which we listen to our lawful superiors, parents, teachers, etc., shows whether or not we are fit to reach God's presence. Christ was the first one to say: "Not my will, but Thine be done!" And, since His time it has been regarded as manly to submit one's will to another in lawful matters.

There will, of course, arise situations in which you must follow your own conscience rather than the command of another. But you must first learn to distinguish between stubbornness and will-power. The former shows weakness of character, while the noble-hearted are always ready to yield. It is stubbornness at your age to tell your parents that you know better than they what type of companions to choose. Read the life of R. E. Lee to see how he acted towards his mother.

**HOW TO  
OBEY**

Instant obedience is what pleases Our Lord. Instant obedience keeps down pride; it gives you self-mastery that is truly Christian. "He who has never learned obedience, can never become his own master, and whosoever is not his own master, lacks mental soundness and balance which a harmonious life demands." Do not argue or reason, but simply go ahead and obey. Look up Genesis III, 6, and see what happened to Eve when she began to waver. Obey instantly, and you will be surprised how easy it is. It may, in many cases, hurt your feelings to obey—no one denies that; but it will better your character to do things that hurt.

**APPLICA-  
TIONS**

1. Temptations get a hold when they are played with. Make it your principle that, in regard to God's law, your obedience will be instantaneous. Obey without hesitation and you will find much contentment and happiness. It never pays to argue, to reason, or to delay when God has manifested his will. Act promptly.

2. Analyze this sentence of Tennyson:

"And because right is right, to follow right  
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

3. See if you can get the meaning of this:

"Via lucis, via crucis."

4. Asceticism does not mean severity in living.

Rather it might be called "a system of spiritual athletics, through which the soul is coached and trained to win the game of eternal life." Does this give you a reason for obeying or submitting to something that is not pleasant? (See, *Catholic Educational Review*, 1923, p. 349).

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### REVERENCE

Reverence is a disposition of the heart and an attitude of mind that leads us to think, speak, and act with a sort of child-like respect toward God, toward our fellow-men, and toward ourselves. Real reverence has in it a mingling of filial fear. It is a check that a person places upon himself, lest he become too familiar with certain persons, things, or events.

#### THE SITUATION

Some Catholics lack proper respect toward the things of God. Many have no reverence at all. American children are noted for their irreverence. Young people frequently lack respect for their acquaintances, for the virtue of those who are in their company.

#### THE PROBLEM

Your task is to cause reverence to grow within yourself, to help others to see the worth of reverence, and to practice reverence toward your companions.

#### OUR DUTY

God enjoins reverence upon us, His creatures. (First three Command-

ments.) "Serve ye the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling (P. II, 11). Since we are the work of His hands, our position demands that we respect God, the cause of our existence. We respect a man who is greatly superior to us in power or learning, yet God is infinitely superior to all. With Him, a "thousand years is as one day."

Reverence for parents and deference to their legitimate wishes is a serious obligation for children. God's plan is that a girl have reverence for her parents, for religious, for her own self. If she does not reverence herself, her companions will hardly do so. Likewise, the young man must take his attitude on this question from Christ, not from his impulses. Once the wall of reverence and respect is broken down, people turn from one another in disgust.

## HELPS

(a) From time to time, meditate on the immensity and the majesty of God, and end your meditation with a prayer for reverence. "And I will meditate on Thy works, and will be employed in Thy doings." Reflection, long continued, will make you reverent.

(b) Respect God's Name. No reverent person will use the Name of God in vain. Newton, the great astronomer, uncovered his head and bowed low whenever that Name was mentioned in his presence. Bow your head at the Name of Jesus. Tip your hat when



you pass a church where Christ dwells in the Blessed Sacrament.

(c) Respect old age. An old man coming to the Olympian games and seeing all the seats taken, found that all the Spartans rose and offered him a seat.

(d) Choose companions who have reverence. Does not the recollection of the Blessed Virgin help you to maintain reverence?

(e) Avoid too much light literature.

(f) Have respect for your body. Christ has dwelt within you as He dwells within the church. Do you respect your body as His temple?

(g) Respect your friends. Avoid undue familiarity and too much inquisitiveness. "No one really loves another who does not feel a certain reverence towards him. It is mutual respect that makes friendships lasting. We learn to condemn what we do not fear, and we cannot love what we condemn. We understand Christ's mercies only when we understand His power and glory, His unspeakable holiness and our demerits; that is, when we fear Him" (22-a).

## REWARD OF REV- ERENCE

"Reverence is the secret of all religion and happiness. Without reverence there is no faith, no hope, no love.

Reverence is the motive of each of the Commandments of Sinai—reverence for God, reverence for our neighbor, reverence for ourselves. Hu-

mility is founded upon it; piety is conserved by it; purity finds in it its shield and buckler. Reverence for God and all that is associated with Him—His ministers, His temples, His services—that is religion. Reverence for our neighbor—his goods, his person, his chattels—that is honesty. . . . Reverence for ourselves—clean bodies and pure souls—that is chastity. Satan is Satan because he is irreverent. There never was an infidel but he was irreverent and a mocker” (30).

**REMARKS** God commands us to respect authority. All lawful authority is from God. Men in authority represent God. We are bound to respect the just laws of legislators, the commands of our parents, the requests of lawful superiors. Obey reverently and you will aid in bringing into American life that fine virtue of reverence. Obey the law because God wishes it.

- APPLICATIONS**
1. You have heard that “familiarity breeds contempt.” What measures might you take to avoid this unpleasant result among persons or friends with whom you come into frequent contact?
  2. What is your opinion of one who reads the letters intended for another or who pries into the secret affairs of his neighbor?
  3. Christian reverence for the body differs from

pagan worship of the body. What can you do to prevent the glorifying of bodily beauty and the excessive care of the body?

4. Who is at fault if you find yourself losing reverence for the things of Faith? Will you ever understand why God does not act as you would?

## CHAPTER XL

### CONDUCT AS AN INDEX TO CHARACTER

The world pays a great deal of attention to qualities which at first sight might not seem to be solidly Christian. But if you examine them closely, you will see that most of them, when they are "true-blue," may be Christian. The world is careful about appearances. Of course, a gentlemanly appearance does not always bespeak a noble heart. In fact, those who practice deceit are frequently the most attractive in manners. But that does not destroy the truth that your conduct is an index to your character. If your conduct is that of a real follower of Christ, then it will show some of the following qualities.

**HONOR**      It is a glorious achievement to maintain one's honor unstained. High-minded people have always sought for this. You do it out of respect for Christ.

Let your word of honor be sacred, never lightly given, but always faithfully kept. Cultivate knightly honor, so that a mother might trust you with her daughter. Taking mean advantage of another is what we expect from those who have no sense of honor.

It is mean to cause your neighbor unnecessarily to lose his honor. At the same time, trifling attacks on your own honor need not arouse you, for slander can seldom harm an honorable man. Prudence will direct you in not entrusting yourself to everyone.

**TRUTH-  
FULNESS**      “To thine own self be true.” Be natural in thought, speech, and action.

Do not have a double code of manners—one for your family and another for your pals down town or your girl friends. Do not attempt to speak learnedly in the presence of the learned. Be natural, be yourself to everyone.

“Love of truth is the basis of character.” Try to develop a fondness for acting truthfully, speaking truthfully, though prudently. Character is largely determined by what you love. If you take as your standard the ideal of pleasing Christ, you will live truthfully. Consider it beneath your dignity to tell lies, lest people class you with him of whom Christ said: “Truth is not in him” (Jn. VIII, 44).

**LOYALTY**      When you have established your ideals in life, and have begun to put them into practice, there will come occasions when you will be tempted to relinquish them. Here the virtue of loyalty will stand you in good stead. For instance, you desire now to remain loyal to Christ, to your home. Well, you might not be successful in

your profession at the start of life, you might not meet the friends you expected to develop and some might suggest an unprincipled way of becoming successful or popular, and you might want to try it just for a while. In that instant, recall what Christ, or Mary, or your mother would do. You will have many battles to fight if you wish to be loyal.

Even success will test your loyalty to your friends, to your employer, and to the principles of your Faith. But if your name is to be a benediction, and not a curse to your family, to your children, then strive heroically to be loyal to Christ, to your family, to your country. You may even have to sacrifice popularity in order to remain loyal to certain principles. In this regard, one statesman took for his motto, "Better faithful than famous."

All human works have their defects. But a person can learn to give his loyalty to what is good in a friend, in his aged parents, in his school, or in a business firm, and to overlook their faults.

## **RELIA- BILITY**

Oh, how the world longs for reliable men and women! Even good people are frequently late in keeping their appointments. Try to establish a reputation for trustworthiness, for being able to handle a job by yourself, and for doing it well. Make it a point to be always on time and to enter whole-heartedly into your work. Your own future experience will show you that faith-



fulness in work is worth while. Show a willingness to work overtime when there is need for it.

## **COURTESY**

Your attachment to Christ will be tested by your kindness toward old people, toward visitors, toward the weak and the uninteresting. If you practice being courteous toward your parents, you will thereby be training yourself to show the same quality towards others whom you wish to please. "There is no surer dissolvent of the home ties than discourtesy." The unpleasant answer, the mean reply, are the things that ruin family life. If you try to foresee the needs of others, you will be saved from many a discourtesy. Girls who "snap back" at their parents can hardly claim Mary for their model.

## **DECISION**

Your judgment of men and affairs ought to be formed slowly, but carried through with firmness. Develop the habit of observing carefully, of studying the evidence, and then making decisions that will stand, so that the mere tone of your voice will carry conviction. You know what hesitation or doubt does to a player on the football field. The same is true in life. You have to figure your plans out ahead of time, and then carry them through perseveringly.

Study the effect which your statements have on others. If you avoid exaggeration, people will soon

come to trust your judgment. Learn the difference between talent and tact. The former may be a gift, but, without the latter, talent is apt to be a failure. "Talent knows *what* to do; tact, *how* to do it."

These qualities are seldom acquired from books. If they have not been bred into you, then submit yourself to the slow disciplinary process of developing them one by one. Young people differ not so much in talent as in energy. Energy and prayer will bring into your make-up some of the qualities mentioned in this lesson. The willingness to be unselfish, to practice self-denial, will aid you to be prudent in your choice. Likewise, it will help you to work out Cardinal Newman's definition of a gentleman as "one who never inflicts pain." Your unkind deeds hurt others; your deficiencies wound your parents. Those who watch you, read your character from your conduct. So try to strengthen your character by the acquisition of sound and admirable qualities.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. In the fourth century, Libanius, a professor, observing the mother of St. John Chrysostom, said: "What wonderful women there are among these Christians." What qualities in her do you suppose elicited that tribute?

2. Is the following a noble trait: "He never liked to show that he saw farther, or was any wiser than the person he was with, and usually took the attitude

of being instructed"? Does character show itself in physical bearing?

3. Do you wish to develop into

"A perfect woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, to command,  
And yet a spirit still and bright  
With something of an angel's light?"

4. Look up Mt. III, 17, and see if you find there an incentive to right conduct.

## CHAPTER XLI

### DANGERS TO YOUR FAITH

**BEING CAUTIOUS** Very early in life you learned that certain precautions were necessary to preserve your physical well-being. You learned that it was not wise to touch a hot stove with your finger. And at the present time you realize that even a small scratch from a rusty nail may be dangerous. That same caution should be used elsewhere.

You will soon start out for yourself in life. A wonderful pearl has been entrusted to your care, and you are expected to preserve it. It is far more valuable than your health. It is a gift that has not been granted to all; it is a privilege for you to have it in your possession. You cannot fully grasp its value until you are ushered into the presence of God. That pearl is your Faith.

Like your health, this gift of Faith has to be carefully guarded. Like your health, too, it can be lost. The point for you to realize is *that in order to preserve your Faith, you must take certain precautions*, lest God withdraw it from you, since it is a free gift. The devil

is interested in robbing of their Faith those who believe in Christ.

## YOUR FAITH AND THE WORLD

Before long, you will find that many views held in the world differ fundamentally from those inculcated in you by your Faith. For instance, some consider prayer as unnecessary, while

Christ tells us it *is* necessary. The world looks only to temporal success; you must keep an eye on eternity. The world has its own standards of right and wrong; you must obey the laws of God. Many accept only what they think they have reasoned out; you must accept some things on faith from Christ.

So here is your problem: to adjust the claims of time and of eternity, of the world and of your Faith, to allow to each its just due. As you grow up, your danger will lie in becoming too much attached to the things of the world, in becoming a part of the world to such an extent that the things of Faith will sink into the depths of unbelief. The world is here, and you are in it, but God intended you to realize that you are made for a better and higher destiny. He intended you to master the world, not to let the world master you. What a calamity it is when people imagine that the world is everything! How dead it makes life, how hopeless!

The world will always be very much with you—companions, pleasures, gossip, business, newspapers,

money, sin, and the attitude of mind that is generated by these things. On the other hand, the things of Faith—God's presence, Christ, Heaven, hell, eternal happiness—these things are not perceived by the senses. The world stands visibly before you, whereas eternity is hidden behind a veil.

**THE  
BLINDING  
POWER  
OF THE  
WORLD**

Attachment to the world can easily cause a person to forget what is behind that veil. The world demands all of your attention while you are here, and, unfortunately, it blinds many to the claims of God and eternity, despite the fact that it can supply nothing better. Even if there were nothing behind the veil, it were better to have lived in hope, because such a life produces better results here. The best men have found that complete contentment or perfect happiness is not possible here on earth. They long for something better. At the same time, it is only too apparent that, although the world cannot completely satisfy the human heart, it often blinds men to the supernatural.

**OUR FAITH  
NOT A  
HUMAN  
DEVEL-  
OPMENT**

Again, there is danger in the fact that the world tries to account for your Faith in a purely natural way, denying that there is anything divine about it. Infidels explain the Faith as they explain the existence of Greece and



Rome. Learned professors occasionally give multitudinous reasons for the Faith except the true and fundamental reason. And by continually hearing such partial statements, students are blinded to the fact that our Faith is divine, based on the authority of Jesus Christ.

There are two important things to remember about your Faith:—(1) that Christ revealed its truths, and (2) that the Church presents them for our belief. Under the plea of being modern, there are those who would diminish your loyalty to your Faith. That loyalty will not be secure unless and until you saturate your soul with the truths that never grow old and are never out of date, because they are not man-made.

You realize that, as you start upon life, it is well for you to take certain precautions to preserve your Faith. Men like to argue, but remember that they cannot judge your Faith by the standards of the world. Despite all their arguing, your Faith is divine; it comes from God. When you tell an acquaintance that you believe Christ to be present in the tabernacle, and he replies that he “cannot see that,” simply tell him that it is not a matter of “seeing” or of “understanding,” but is an article of the Faith accepted on Christ’s word. Christ, being God, is absolutely trustworthy, and we place full confidence in Him. He did not mean a dozen things when He said: “This is My Body.” We accept the one, logical, and consistent interpretation of the Catholic Church, rather than the dozens of views of those who do not believe.

**SPECIAL  
DANGERS**

(a) Pride consists in unwillingness to be directed by the Church in matters of religion, in imagining that you know more than the Church, in feeling that some of her practices are out of date. When a man has ceased to pray, pride steps in and faith departs. Pray continually for faith, for *it is a gift that comes to the prayerful*, to those who are willing to admit that there is Someone in the universe bigger than they are and more capable.

(b) Little neglects of duty, such as omitting morning prayers, soon bring dislike and the danger of indifference.

(c) Reading without thought of what effect it may have on your mind, is also dangerous. You do not eat poison; why, therefore, read that which seeks to poison your mind against God, against your Faith?

(d) Do not listen to those who pretend they can put you into communication with the dead. Remember that the Church forbids participation in spiritistic séances. If such communication is established by trickery, why should you encourage such dangerous trickery? If it is the work of the devil, why give him a hold on you?

**APPLICA-  
TIONS**

1. What would you do to aid a friend who stays away from Mass regularly or who is ashamed to go to the Sacraments?

2. In time, a daily prayer like this, "Lord, increase my faith," will bring results. Say it at the same time every day—when going to work, when retiring at night, or when walking alone.

3. Your Faith saves you from the madness of Spiritism. Think of the number who have become insane from believing that they were in touch with the spirits of the dead. Is it not playing with your Faith to attend séances?

4. A convert has said: "The supernatural has been thrown aside; a truly human religion is wanted, and hence a merely human one." Does this not expose the intentions of those who seek to explain everything in your Faith by natural development?

## CHAPTER XLII

### PUTTING ON CHRIST

#### CHILD-

#### HOOD IM- ITATION

You know that, as a child, you made frequent use of imitation. The words spoken by your parents were not long in finding their way into the vocabulary that you built up word by word. The actions of others were also reproduced by you. Perhaps this was done more or less unconsciously at first, but, as you grew older, the value of imitation became apparent to you, and your ambition was to imitate certain persons or certain ways. You attached great value to what was done by your heroes and set about imitating them. You found that, by keeping before your mind a picture of the way your hero "did his trick," or by repeating his accomplishment, you could soon do the same thing—at least, to a certain extent. But you had to repeat the act frequently and to keep an accurate picture before your mind if you wished to advance, or to develop a certain talent, or to act like your hero. It is said that the best golf players started as caddies. When caddying they observed the actions of the players, and thus there were stored in their young minds

pictures that remained and influenced their later actions.

You were not very old before you learned that not every word, or act was worthy of being imitated. Your parents objected to many of the things that you wished to imitate, and now you can begin to see their wisdom.

**CONTEST**      The age of childhood has passed, but  
**IN YOUTH-**      the need for imitation remains. More  
**FUL**              and more, it becomes a question of  
**CHOICES**        what to imitate. We saw in the lesson on ideals that the right choice requires courage. We saw in the last lesson that choice of the things that the world holds up before us may result in the loss of our Faith.

You now stand on the threshold of life. You wonder what to imitate, what class of people to follow, what kind of companions to choose, what model of social development to keep before you, what sort of literature to read. A choice has to be made, *and you must do the choosing and be responsible for the choice.*

The question will finally narrow itself down to this: "Which is more important—time or eternity, here or hereafter?" Neither should be entirely excluded; both are necessary for your full development.

The world will make its appeal felt in your life; the desire for intellectual keenness will attract a few; the soft voices of feigned friends bidding you enjoy

life may seduce you; the glitter of gold will cast its glow across the imaginations of others; the lure of popularity will entice some; but over them all, from the shore of eternity, comes the appealing call of Christ: "*Follow Me!*" That means life with God and companionship with Christ, undiminished joy, peace after the strife.

The choice will be safely made, the dangers to your Faith will be surmounted, the cares of the world will be effectively dealt with, if, like St. Paul, you "*put on Christ.*" Here is your method for leading a successful life; here is the aim that we have sought to drive home throughout this course; here is a process that should go on throughout your entire life, namely, the process of "putting on Christ." St. Paul explains how this should be done, and we shall do well to follow his directions.

## THE NEED OF CHRIST

We saw that Christ is our Leader. We accept His promise of eternal life. We see in His Church and the Sacraments the means that He took to prepare us for this life with God. And yet there is that ever-present, fascinating appeal of the world that seems to hold so much for the young. How can you live in the world and still be one of Christ's own? How can you work in the world and for the good of the world, yet not become too worldly?

There can be but one answer. You must not merely



imitate the world, but you must live the life of Jesus Christ, Who came that men might have the life of the soul, the life that prepares them for eternity. It is easy to "put on the world"; your task is to "put on Christ," to follow His ideals, to give Him your heart. You must aim to say with St. Paul, "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me." To live with Christ in eternity, you must begin to live with Him here on earth by imitating Him.

### **THE PROCESS OF "PUT- TING ON CHRIST"**

If Christ is to be your Leader, you must first begin to know Him. That means reading, listening to sermons, studying religion, reflecting in front of the tabernacle, kneeling beside your bed in prayer night and morning.

You must steadily keep before you the picture of Our Lord, the God-Man, the Master of Peter, and you must reverently dwell on that picture from time to time.

You will be surprised at the effect of this practice. Christ was once a Boy. He worked, He obeyed His parents, He fulfilled the religious duties of a Jew, He walked, talked, and ate among the people. He knew what human suffering was, He understood the thoughts and ambitions of young people, He loved the good that was in them. His life was filled with good deeds; yet He often retired into the solitude, to pour out His soul to God. He withstood temptations of wealth and power, pride and presumption. And "We do not read

that He enjoyed the cross; but we do read that He *endured it*." He was not afraid to suffer; He had recourse to prayer; He kept faith in the things of eternity.

To think about Christ you do not have to be learned or highly educated. It is not the amount of knowledge that you have which counts; it is the reflecting, the interpreting, which you do on that which you possess. You "put on Christ" when you are kind, when you control your temper, when you refuse to say mean things about others, when you deny yourself some pleasures in order to get to Mass. You all know enough about Christ to follow Him; but prayerfully thinking about Him will make you one with Him. "If we become one with Him, we shall understand His doctrines and obey His Commandments."

If you persevere in this practice, you will finally have Christ as a guide in all your actions. You will then be enabled to work in the world and for the world without forgetting Christ. Your sharing in the good things of the world need not cause you to lose the friendship of your Master and your share in the joys eternal.

You should aim to "put on Christ" for the benefit of others. Many do not know how Christian principles can be worked out in practice. St. Paul advised Timothy to "meditate upon these things, be wholly in these things; *that thy profiting may be manifest to all*" (1 Tim., IV, 15).

“Putting on Christ” will be a slow process. But be patient. The memories of childhood will convince you that it is you yourself who will have to do the “putting on,” and you will have to make a steady effort. You imitated your mother, your father, your teacher, in order to get ahead in the world. In a similar way, to advance spiritually, you must imitate Christ and the saints, not for a week, not for a month, but for years, all through life.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Study the story of “The Great Stone Face,” by Hawthorne, to see how one gradually grows into his hero and becomes like him.

2. Study this pledge of the Columbian Squires: “I promise upon my honor to imitate the youthful Christ, Who grew in wisdom, stature, and grace before God and man. For this purpose, I will endeavor earnestly to perfect myself spiritually, intellectually, and socially.”

3. The Jews were astonished at the constancy of Peter and John, because they knew that they were “illiterate and ignorant men,” so the Jews attributed the power of the Apostles to the fact that they “*had been with Jesus*” (Acts, IV, 13). Do you not see how the Apostles had “put on Christ”? It showed plainly in their lives.

4. St. Teresa of Lisieux, the “Little Flower of Jesus,” said: “I believe that it is Jesus Himself hid-

den in my poor heart, Who is mysteriously at work, inspiring me from hour to hour with whatever He wishes me to do." Is that the result of friendship?

5. A student is tempted to do a mean trick, or to tell an obscene story, but he stops and thinks of Christ. Is he in that instant "putting on Christ"? Try it out when tempted.

## CHAPTER XLIII

### BUILDING CATHOLIC HOMES

“Much peace have they that love Thy Law, and to them there is no stumbling block” (Ps. CXVIII).

The hope of religion, the strength of the country, the backbone of your life-work, the source of your truest joys, the cradle of Christian character, and the place where young people best learn to “put on Christ,” is in the home. The love you have for it, and the sacrifices that you are willing to make for it, will determine its quality.

#### THE SITUATION

Modern life tends to break up home life and to limit the size of the family.

Renting, frequent moving, the demands of business and pleasure, economic difficulties, a lack of intelligent insight into the function of authority in the home, and a lack of faith that God will provide for those who do their duty—these defects often spoil what God intended to be a center of peace and edification, joy and inspiration.

Frequent absence from home makes one restless when he is at home. Parted company tends to destroy the affection which the members of a family should

have for one another. And the habit of looking at life merely from the viewpoint of gain soon submerges the interests of God, dries up the souls of parents and lowers their ideals, and thus the spiritual growth of children is often stunted.

“Better than gold is a peaceful home  
Where all the fireside characters come,  
The shrine of love, the heaven of life  
Hallowed by mother, or sister, or wife.  
However humble the home may be,  
Or tried with sorrow by heaven’s decree,  
The blessings that never were bought or sold,  
And center there, are better than gold.”—Fr. A. Ryan.

## MEETING THIS SIT- UATION

(a) To make a home thoroughly Catholic, you must continually ask for God’s aid. The finest homes that we have were made so by loving, prudent, and prayerful mothers and fathers. The more effort you make to produce a good Catholic home here, the warmer will be your welcome into the Home Eternal.

(b) A gentle firmness is required in governing children. God places parents in a position of responsibility and expects them to exercise their authority conscientiously. Reasonable obedience makes children of character. Far more respect is given to parents in later life by those who were taught to obey as children.



(c) A disagreeable temper kills good cheer.

(d) Spend as much as possible of your recreation time at home.

(e) Money will not make a home, though it may furnish a house. Expensive furniture does not bring happiness. The wife should not be extravagant in her demands, especially if the husband has but a slender purse. Self-sacrificing thoughtfulness, loyalty, good cheer, thrift, patience, and common sense are worth more than a big income. Every effort should be made to provide a sufficient income, but money must not be made the all-absorbing pursuit.

(f) Try to maintain an intellectual atmosphere in the home. Members of the family might find time to read to one another. Friends can be brought in to discuss questions in much the same way as that which was followed in Benjamin Franklin's home. It was the concern of Franklin's father "to create for the children a home atmosphere, which might turn their attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the conduct of life. There was music for them in the evening. Often a sensible friend or neighbor was invited in for meals, and some ingenious or useful topic that might tend to improve their minds was discussed before the children." Why not try this plan?

(g) There are many homes that lack cheer. It would benefit your home, and perhaps others, too, if from time to time you carried cheer where sadness or misfortune reigns.

(h) An occupation that would not give time for home life ought not to be entered into, unless there be a necessity. If you aim to live a good Catholic home life, it will be easier to keep away from certain occupations, to turn down certain offers. If worldly advancement would tend to endanger your home life, it ought not to be accepted without a stringent reason.

There are many attractions drawing you away from home life. You must learn to choose wisely among them. Not every club or society can be joined. Not every entertainment may be attended.

(i) Woman's noblest sphere is the home. The home and not the club should be her ideal, her ambition. Is it not a noble motive to aim to co-operate with God by forming future citizens of Heaven? What a noble task it is, to rear Christlike children! If the mother and father strive to be like Mary and Joseph, how much more like the Child-Jesus would the children of the home become! When the husband earns a living, the mother's time should be given to the children, not to further economic gain. God intended mothers and fathers to spend as much of their time as possible with their children. Too many children, like Topsy, "just grow"; no one takes time to train them properly.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. Cultivate an even temper and cheerfulness. The "silent and imperceptible influences of life are often the most permanent."

2. The pestilence of irreligion is everywhere; yet parents can still rear boys and girls of character and virtue, if they but make a serious effort to counteract the evil influences of the day. The mothers of saints directed their children along the steep and narrow path. They taught them to "put on Christ." Make that your ambition for your children, rather than wealth and high rank in society.

3. Sorrow finds its way into the noblest of lives. When it comes to you and you look for consolation, try to find it within your own home, or in a church, not in dissipation.

4. Cardinal Mercier said: "After God, I owe the best of myself to my holy mother. It was in her society that I learned and understood, first unconsciously, afterwards consciously, that love is made up of forgetfulness of self, of devotion to one's neighbor. It is from her heart, from the serene strength of her resolution, that I learned this great lesson of life." Would you like to have a similar tribute paid to you? If so, what sacrifices must you make? Have you ever experienced the happiness of doing good to others?

5. Look up Jn. XIX, 25 and then discuss whether or not you could picture a finer scene of a mother's loyalty.

## CHAPTER XLIV

### MIXED MARRIAGES

Happy homes result from happy marriages. Happy marriages result from God's blessing and the observance of certain precautions. When you contemplate marriage, you will find that the secret of contentment is bound up in the cautions that the Church advises before the matrimonial bond is tied.

In loyalty to her Founder, the Church must stand for that type of marriage which Christ prescribed. He stood for the unity of the marriage bond; He wished His followers to have peace of conscience; and He expected married couples to exercise the virtue of self-control, without which there can be no peace.

If it is wisdom to trust Christ, then it is likewise wisdom to trust the Church, for she speaks the thoughts of Christ. The union that exists between Christ and His Church is a model for a union to be formed between a Catholic man and a Catholic woman. The Church asks you to choose a Catholic as your life-mate; she asks that you be kind and faithful to that mate, and if you do so, peace ordinarily ought to come into your life. The union between Christ and the Church is a sacred one, and ought you not look upon your life-union in the same light?

**THE DAN-  
GER OF  
MIXED  
MAR-  
RIAGES**

Some imagine that they can find happiness without adhering to the Catholic principle of the unity, the indissolubility, and the sacredness of the marriage bond. Before taking a dangerous step, the Church asks you to consider the following points:

(a) The Catholic who enters a mixed marriage is taking a chance on a life contract. In such matters it does not appear wise to take a chance, since *the bond cannot be broken*.

(b) Married life, at best, has many difficulties. In a mixed marriage, God might withdraw graces that would certainly come to a Catholic union. Life is a preparation for eternity. Those who follow God's directions in preparing for it, without a doubt merit more graces. And marriage should be an aid in preparing for eternity. Marriage is for mutual help. Therefore, it is wise to choose a Catholic mate in order to merit as much help as possible.

(c) The non-Catholic party might not understand your supernatural viewpoint. He or she might scoff at things that you hold dear, because, without the light of the Faith, a number of our practices appear foolish to a non-Catholic, and it is hard to endure scoffing. You are exposed in a mixed marriage to a possible loss of your Faith.

(d) Not half of the unhappiness that frequently results from mixed marriage appears before the world.

Be not deceived by those who are ashamed to admit that they made a grievous mistake.

(e) Husbands seldom teach the children religion. Where the mother is non-Catholic there often results the un-Catholic or at least religiously indifferent rearing of the children.

(f) There is only one standard of right and wrong and that is found in the Commandments, in the Sermon on the Mount, and in the regulations of the Church. It is decidedly wrong to accept the views of those who hold that one's personal views determine whether an act is right or wrong. God has set the standard; you are not allowed to set up your own standard of right and wrong. On entering the married state with a Catholic, the non-Catholic must solemnly promise to see to it that the children are reared Catholics. But this is difficult when the non-Catholic party does not know the Catholic religion. Should the Catholic parent die, what will happen to the Faith of the children?

### **CAREFUL CHOICE OF COM- PANIONS**

Natural prudence directs that you be not too friendly nor too intimate with every person whom you chance to meet. You have learned to be cautious in bestowing confidence on others; why should not some of this caution guide you in selecting or starting a companionship that may lead to a life partnership? If you really consider your Faith to be a precious pearl, ought you not to



think twice before taking a chance of losing it? Beware, especially, of a flattering tongue. There may be evil intentions concealed behind it.

A Catholic who desires to maintain a Catholic home will certainly merit from God some opportunity to meet worthy friends. If you aim to admit only noble characters into the inner circle of your friendships, surely you will find many such among the members of your Faith. Young people frequently rush into dangerous situations rashly and then expect God's help. It is difficult to see how God could bless those who neglect their friends and the graces God gives them and rush into an uncertain and dubious life partnership.

Let this thought be your guide: "Two who share the same joys and sorrows, hearts that beat in unison to the same memories and hopes, lives merged into one for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, even unto death, *should not be divided when they approach their common God* in adoration, in petition, in the hour of need, and in grateful thanksgiving for blessings" (21-a).

## THE KINDNESS OF THE CHURCH

Individuals sometimes maintain that the Church is unreasonable, since she will not allow the marriage bond to be broken between those who are unhappily married. But in order to see the wisdom of her stand, just observe those who obtain divorces. Does divorce make them happier?

No, only the harder to satisfy, and they go from one divorce to another. The Church must also look to the good of society as a whole.

If the Church were to "let down the bars," many would try to escape the obligations of a disadvantageous marriage. The Catholic position protects the virtuous. If separation were easy to obtain, those lacking in virtue would contract marriage with wrong motives, knowing they would not be held to support a wife or remain married to her. Christ absolutely demands that man and wife keep the bond of unity. He knows that such a plan is conducive to the happiness of the human race. The Church is opposed to mixed marriages, because she wishes to insure, both here and hereafter, the happiness of those who enter the married state. She is opposed to hasty marriages, marriages between near relatives, and secret marriages. In this opposition, she is governed by the desire to protect you from serious mistakes that might cause you much discontent and regret.

Those who have listened to her voice when they were preparing for marriage usually realize later that the Church was seeking their happiness when she laid down certain conditions.

<b>OBEY GOD</b>	In married life, the Christian ideal
<b>RATHER</b>	is love and duty, not selfish in-
<b>THAN</b>	dulgence. The former will weld the
<b>MAN</b>	hearts into one; the latter will debase

both husband and wife. A good Christian will at all times be faithful to his home obligations. He will practice self-control. He will avoid the evil practices of the world in order that he may merit the better joys of innocent children and a happy home life. He will realize that pagan practices in married life, instead of bringing satisfaction, tend rather to make home life bestial and unhappy.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. One thing you will find to be true: the apparently hard ways and duties lead to contentment and happiness.

Sacrifices that seem hard to make leave the heart full of peace when they are accepted. On the other hand, you will soon learn that the more you surrender to your animal impulses, the more disgust and dissatisfaction will you meet with in life. The spirit of Christ makes sacrifices easy. Therefore be not afraid to choose a hard line of duty. Trust His wisdom. Prudence may be acquired by observing homes that are governed by a truly Catholic spirit. Note the attitude of those young people who are the product of a home life fashioned after the Christian ideal.

2. The church has a right to legislate concerning your married life because she is God's official representative on the questions of proper preparation for eternity. She must also guard the souls of children.

## CHAPTER XLV

### THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

#### **THE REASON FOR ITS EXISTENCE**

You were made for God. You have been chosen a "candidate for eternity." Your main purpose here on earth is to prepare for Heaven, to become Christlike, as far as that is possible. You have within you that which, by proper handling and development, will insure you a welcome among God's "blessed ones."

Education means preparation for life; it means the development of faculties. To be complete and harmonious, education must prepare not only for this life, but also for the eternal life with God; it must develop ability to succeed not only here, but also hereafter. If, as our Faith teaches us, a child has a soul which by proper development will one day enjoy the Beatific Vision, then a complete system of education must include the nurturing of the soul. A system of education that neglects the main purpose of man's being on earth can hardly lay claim to be complete.

In educating the child, we must not only keep in mind his physical make-up, his mental capacities, and

his esthetical development, but *we must make some provision for his spiritual growth*. What does it profit a man if he be fitted to gain wealth and fame, but be not given an opportunity to know something about eternal life? If intellectual keenness lead not a person to God, then sad indeed is the plight of that mind. Man's obligation to prepare himself for God necessitates that young people be instructed how to win the battle for eternity as well as the battles of life.

The presence of an immortal soul in each child, its destiny to be united with God, the need of directing children how to reach their ultimate goal, these are the reasons for the Catholic school system. Catholic schools aim to give physical, social, and mental development, and also to have their pupils exemplify the virtues which Christ prescribed. When the world beholds young people proving by their lives that the Beatitudes are realizable, it may come to Christ; but a long training is necessary to acquire the spirit of Christ. Hence the need of Catholic schools to train in that spirit, to study how to exemplify Christ. Catholic education includes a study of Christ and Christ's doctrines. Would anyone dare to say that the study of Christ is not worth while? Would any one say that it does not deserve a place in the curriculum?

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The child is so constituted that the various phases of his character must

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ordinarily be developed simultaneously; if not, then one or the other is in danger of being stunted or remaining undeveloped. If development does not come at the proper time, it may never come. The Catholic school fills a need at the right time. The millions today who were neglected spiritually in their youth, and who now pay no attention to religion, are ample proof that if religious training be put off until men can choose a religion for themselves, a majority of persons will neglect it entirely.

A young child removed from his mother can grow away from her and no longer feel a desire to be with her; nor will there be a real affection for the mother on the part of the child in later life. The child can likewise be turned away from God; and, being taught to seek his happiness in the gratification of worldly desires, he may not feel his obligations to the eternal Father. The millions of Americans who at this time practice no spiritual religion are proof that God can be forgotten and excluded from life.

The Catholic child belongs to God. It was raised to a participation in the divine life by being given an immortal soul, redeemed by Jesus Christ, and cleansed and renewed in the waters of Baptism. It is absolutely wrong to presume that the child need not be told of, or prepared for, this sublime destiny. No school child in America is left in ignorance of the privilege



of liberty. Is not heaven worthy of the same treatment? In reality, all children belong to God.

Appreciation of Christ, of His Church, and of eternal life does not come quickly, but is the result of long teaching, reflection and practice. It is the product of an education that gives to each element its proper place in life. Training for the adjustment of the experiences of life is given in the school room; hence religion must have a place in the school curriculum, for it alone gives a proper rating to things in life. When children learn that a certain element is left out of the curriculum, they soon conclude that such an element is not important enough for them to consider; and this same attitude may persist through life. Religion must enter the child's experience and become part of his daily life.

### **A NOBLE PATRIOT- ISM**

The public school system of America has the support of Catholics, but because Catholics believe that their children must also be trained for eternity, they are willing to impose an extra burden upon themselves to support a system that makes for adequate soul-growth.

Others, who do not believe as Catholics do in this important matter of preparing for eternity, should at least recognize that we are doing a noble thing in supporting two school systems. History cannot point to a more broad-minded action.

**BUILDED  
UPON  
AMERI-  
CAN PRIN-  
CIPLES**

(a) Parents have the first right over their children. The natural law grants them this right. It is thus their duty and privilege to give their children a proper education. The State cannot dictate to them how to rear their children. American courts have recognized this principle. In June, 1925, the Supreme Court of the United States said: "The fundamental theory of liberty upon which all Governments in this Union repose, excludes any general power of the State to standardize its children by forcing them to receive instruction from public teachers only. . . . *The child is not a mere creature of the State.* Those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right coupled with the high duty to recognize and prepare him for additional duties." In June, 1923, in declaring unconstitutional a Nebraska state law, the Supreme Court said: "Evidently the legislature has attempted to interfere with the power of parents to control the education of their children." These decisions leave no doubt as to the right of parents to send their children to any properly conducted school. They leave no doubt as to the fact that private schools have a right to exist. It must be remembered that before 1840 practically all the schools of this country were private, not State schools, and who will dare to say that the private schools have ceased to turn out real Americans?

(b) It is an American principle that citizens may

pursue any lawful business, vocation, or profession. Constitutionally, no one can question the right of teachers to exercise their profession in private or denominational schools. The Fourteenth Amendment secures this right. If they may teach, there may be schools where religion is taught. Certainly, teaching children to know and love God is no crime.

**THE REAL FRIENDS OF AMERICA** If you will read American history, you will learn that the real friends of America were not those who prated of their loyalty, but rather those who sacrificed their possessions and themselves for their country.

Catholics have a glorious record in deeds and sacrifices. They have a right to give their children religious instruction. The menace to this country comes from those who would so split up the child's training as to make it pagan, leaving God out entirely. We realize that not every man will agree with our idea as to how religion should be taught, but we believe that all sane men will agree with us that it is not wise to have children ignorant of God and taught to look upon religion as a myth or superstition.

The real friends of this country are those who resist the excessive craze for the standardization of education, for "made-to-order children." It would be a sad day if every child were forced to attend the same school and then sent out "according to order," a

standardized product. Some standardization of courses is needed, but the child is a human being that must not be handled like a machine.

This country abounds with zealots who try to force their fads upon the community. There are many who maintain that it is only their piety, their love of country, that urges them to fight for "one school, and that the public school." Because of the fine words employed by these zealots, the unsuspecting are frequently won over to an erroneous view. The real friends of America are those who loyally guard the Constitution. It would be a great benefit to the future of this country to protect it against the dangerous narrowmindedness of zealots. In such questions, seek the views of real Americans like George Washington, Lincoln, R. E. Lee, Theodore Roosevelt.

## **APPLICA- TIONS**

1. Men must know something of the Catholic Faith before they can understand the Catholic school system. If you are of a high type of character yourself, you will be able to enlighten others. Be unselfish, yet firm; humble, yet learned; broadminded, yet a defender of justice and truth. This will convince fair-minded non-Catholics of the reasonableness of your position. Explain our school system in a kindly way to those who are interested.

2. Why does not knowledge alone make men virtuous?

3. Why is the cause of freedom not safe among a godless people?

4. Do you think that the home could supply the needed religious instruction? In 1840, Horace Mann thought that it could; was he right?

5. One writer says: "We are apt in these days to forget that we may have a highly civilized people without schools of instruction, and on the other hand that schools may cover a country and the people yet remain uncivilized." What does that mean? (31).

## CHAPTER XLVI

### THE SACRAMENTS FUNCTIONING AS CHRIST INTENDED

#### **TO GOD THROUGH THE EX- TERNAL WORLD**

Your first knowledge of God came to you through your senses. You heard your mother speak of Him. Later, the pictures you saw, the stories you heard, the books you read, the environment and instruction in school caused the idea of the Creator to develop within your mind. Though God is a spirit, and your soul is spiritual, yet you found<sup>1</sup> yourself learning of this Creator through some visible agency. You were associated with a group of people who made up the Catholic Church—a visible organization. Perhaps you were in a Catholic school for the purpose of learning about God. You found the Church to be an authorized link between God and your soul, explaining God to you and directing you on your way to Him. She told you that all nature testifies to the existence of an infinite Creator. The little flower spoke of Someone Who fashioned it; the regularity of the seasons told of Someone Who regulated them. The lesson of all this seems to be that God intended that you should learn about Him through the external world. He knew the natural way



of learning, through the senses, and hence employed things visible, things that fall under the senses, as agents to tell you of the infinite Being Who made all things, including your own marvelous body. God might have enlightened each individual separately and interiorly, but He preferred, as a rule, to let His creatures find Him through some visible form. St. Paul condemns those who did not realize that "the invisible things of Him . . . are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and divinity; so that they are inexcusable" (Romans I, 20).

### **TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST**

But God spoke not only through the external world, through nature and His creatures; He sent His Son in the visible form of a Man to bring man-

kind back to God. Christ, being God, knew what had to be done in order to enable men to reach Heaven. And in the plan which He worked out for you to follow, He did not cease to employ external and visible things to aid you.

Christ said that He was the Light of the world. He wished to enlighten those men who would not be led to God through nature, and to fortify those who were led to God through the external world. We believe that by following this Light we automatically prepare ourselves for life eternal with God. Christ prayed; so must we. Christ went about doing good;

so must we. Christ practiced self-denial; so must we. Christ demanded obedience to the Commandments; we must obey. In the Eight Beatitudes Christ laid down rules for spiritual development; we must try to follow those rules. But, since Christ as Man was the invisible made visible, how were we to be led to God when Christ should leave the world?

We know that Christ desired His Church to be a visible agency that should inform the world concerning God's wishes. But we also know that Christ spoke of water, food, light, and of the power of these things to bring men to God. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God" (Jn. III, 5); "I am the bread of life" (Jn. VI, 48); "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world" (Jn. VI, 52).

Evidently Christ intended that in His Church there was to be a visible, external way of bringing men to God, of preparing them for God, of communicating God to them. The Sacraments, by bringing God to men, lift men toward God. Our innate love of symbolism was employed by Christ for spiritual purposes.

## **TO GOD THROUGH THE SACRA- MENTS**

Christ made water the sign of a *spiritual cleansing and rebirth* that must take place in a man before he can be admitted to the presence of God. A new, supernatural life is given at

the time of Baptism. Christ's own Flesh was to be the means of developing this spiritual life within His followers. You know that three things are suggested by the signs employed in the different Sacraments. By the sign each individual is (a) to recall what Christ did, (b) to realize what takes place in the soul when one receives a Sacrament, (c) to know what the future result of that Sacrament ought to be. Holy Communion brings God to you. Grace is the presence of the Holy Ghost within you, and the Holy Ghost is divine Life. "Baptism commences this supernatural life within you—it is a birth; Holy Eucharist nourishes the supernatural life within you—it is a Food; Penance cures diseases affecting the life of the soul—it is a medicine; Confirmation wards off dangers to the supernatural life—it is an armor; Holy Orders begets ministers of the supernatural life; Matrimony begets receivers of the supernatural life; and Extreme Unction helps the supernatural life in its greatest danger."

The Sacraments are, therefore, part of the grand plan whereby God comes to men and men are led to Him through external, visible means. If the Sacraments are to function, to work as Christ intended them, they should speak to you of God, just as the world speaks, for the Sacraments are signs.

Man is a creature endowed with senses; He learns through his senses. God placed a visible sign in each Sacrament in order that that sign, which produces

and denotes the actual reception of grace, might assure man of the spiritual change that is taking place within him. The sign indicates that there is a supernatural life in man, if he has fulfilled the conditions.

Are you not amazed by the fact that in Communion the God of the universe is brought to you, under a visible form? You believe that radio is marvelous because it puts you in touch with people far removed from your presence. But the Sacraments put you in touch with Divinity. When you participate in the Mass, you are at Calvary. The past, the present, and the future come up before you when you are present at the administration of a Sacrament. Each Sacrament is a sign in its own way; each brings grace in its own way; each fulfills a particular need at a particular time. The invisible transformation that takes place within your soul is indicated by the visible sign; for, each Sacrament contains and brings about the grace that it signifies. Since water signifies cleansing, it actually (together with the words that constitute the form) brings about cleansing and rebirth in Baptism. Since Holy Communion is a Food, it actually causes your soul to grow toward God.

The full effects of the Sacraments will not be known to you in this life. The full spiritual development caused by the Holy Eucharist cannot be seen by mortal eyes. You trust in Christ and you know that, by receiving this Sacrament, you grow more appreciative of God's presence in eternity. The more you feed on

that Food here, the more you will be like the Author of that Food in eternity. No wonder that Christ laid stress on this Sacrament, since it adorns your soul with the eternal presence.

Each time that you attend Mass or receive holy Communion, say this prayer: "O sacred banquet, wherein Christ is received, the memory of His Passion is kept, the mind is filled with grace, and there is given a pledge of coming glory." Look upon this Sacrament as an opportunity to fit yourself for God's presence, which is the Beatific Vision.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. You see now why we seek to have good Catholic homes. You see the need of a Church as the dispenser of God's graces through the Sacraments. You understand the need of Catholic schools. We said in the first lesson that your religion contains wondrous joys and insights for you, if you but try to think them out and pray for their appreciation. It takes years to grasp the value to you of your Catholic Faith. To aid you to arrive at that appreciation, there are Catholic homes, Catholic schools, classes in religion, religious exercises; and they all have for their end the "putting on of Christ."

2. What prevents Penance and the Holy Eucharist from producing their intended fruits?

3. What have been your reasons for going to Communion?

4. How may a boy or girl develop the habit of seeing the hand of God beneath all visible creation? The preface of the Mass for Christmas, says: "While we know God visibly, we may be drawn through the visible to a love of the invisible." Study the meaning of that.

5. When will the Sacraments produce the fullest effect or fruit in your soul?



## CHAPTER XLVII

### THE LABORERS ARE TOO FEW

“The noblest occupation that you can picture is to coöperate with God in the salvation of souls.”

Christ died that you might have life—life with God. Adam’s sin had excluded the human race from God’s presence. Christ’s Crucifixion earned for men the right to reënter Heaven. This was a free offering on the part of Christ, and it was made not for any special group, but for the entire human race. He understood fully the joys to which men had been called by God, and hence the extent to which He went to show you that the Beatific Vision of God in eternity is worth while. His wish is that all men might learn about Him and follow His directions on how to prepare for eternity.

The great difficulty has always been to convince the generality of mankind, to attract men and women, boys and girls, to the value of what Christ did for them. He did not choose to appear outwardly to you and compel you to enter eternity; neither, in His own time, did He practice mere inward suggestion. He wished to show men outwardly what had been done for

them, to give them help, and to allow them to decide for themselves. For this reason, He appeals to generous hearts, especially the young, to help Him to convince people of His love for them, to enlighten them concerning the wonderful privilege of being called one day to share God's joys. He asks some of His followers to be specialists who shall teach others how to "put on Christ."

## **A VOCA- TION**

A vocation is, therefore, an invitation to assist Christ in a special manner in the work of saving souls. In other words, Christ chooses certain men and women to work for Him, to carry His message to all peoples. "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." Some are called to the priesthood, others to the convent. Some are chosen for life in a religious order with solemn vows, and others are chosen for a life in a religious congregation with simple vows. Some are chosen to be Brothers. Some are chosen to lead a life of prayer for others, some for a life of activity and prayer; some are chosen for teaching, others for nursing, others for social service in a consecrated way, others for the foreign missions. They all are chosen to do Christ's work. Those called to the married state likewise do God's work.

If you feel a call to the priesthood or brotherhood or convent, you should give it serious and prayerful consideration. The call may come to you inwardly and

linger in your mind for a long time. It may come indirectly through some person, event, book, or retreat. Christ might employ any of these means to make His call known to you. But He wants you not to hesitate to give up the world for His sake. Note how He called St. Peter, St. Andrew, and others (Mk. I, 16-20; Lu. V, 27-28; Mark X, 17-25), and how He expects those whom He calls to have the spirit of self-denial and to follow Him.

Think of the privilege to a human being, to be called to work with Christ.

## **HOW A VOCA- TION IS RECOG- NIZED**

A vocation varies with the individual.

Signs of a vocation are:

(a) Attraction to the altar, the desire to care for the altar, and to be around it.

(b) The desire to help Christ, or, seeing the need of having more to preach His Gospel.

(c) A turning away from the things of the world, and a feeling that the sanctuary or the convent is your place.

(d) A love of saving souls or of redeeming people from sin.

(e) Someone makes the suggestion to you, someone who understands your mental make-up and your fitness, and the suggestion remains. Or some event brings the idea strikingly home to you. Of course, not every pious thought of helping Christ is a sign of

a vocation. The idea must remain with you when you are calm and away from excitement.

(f) Right motive and unselfish intention.

(g) In the beginning, there may be merely a hint, or faint suggestion; but if it is handled rightly, if prayer and generous consideration are given to it, it may gradually assume the shape of an inclination and give evidence that Christ is calling. He gives His light gradually. He will not often pull you by the sleeve. If, after the first indication, you show good will and unselfishness, he will give you *further light*. Apparent difficulties may be nothing else but means to test your perseverance, or your spirit of unselfishness, or your willingness to give up all things for Christ. It is not for you to decide whether or not you have the necessary talents. Go to an experienced guide, and ask and take his advice. The point for you to determine is whether or not you have the inclination to aid Christ in any particular field. Do not brood over the incidental difficulties. Others will tell you whether or not you have the fitness, but keep *your heart and mind on the goal*, namely, working for Christ in a special, consecrated way.

**WHO MAY  
GO ON FOR  
THE  
PRIEST-  
HOOD OR**

Officially, anyone who has the right intention and is called by the bishop may go on for the priesthood. Those who have not reached that stage may place perfect confidence in a prudent

**RELI-  
GIOUS  
LIFE**

confessor, to whom they have explained every side of the situation. Those who have the necessary talents and disposition, and who are counseled by a prudent confessor need have no fears about going on. A girl should not be deterred by the thought that convent life is hard. Christ makes sacrifice easy for those who truthfully rely on Him.

Sometimes those who love to do good to others, to help others, may receive a suggestion that they become priests or enter the convent. They need not be afraid to follow the call. The Apostles seem to have had no premonition of their calling. In some cases, Christ just walked by and said: "Follow Me." The Apostles did not hesitate, but trusted Him. Christ expects you also to trust Him. He will not call you and then desert you if you do the right thing. You need not be perfect in order to go; in fact, you may seem very imperfect but Christ will transform you if you have faith in Him and show Him earnest endeavor. This applies to both the priesthood and the religious life.

There are some who feel that they would not want the responsibilities of the priesthood, and yet they would like to work for Christ. Such students would find their place, perhaps, in the brotherhood of a religious order or congregation.

**NOUR-  
ISHING**

Some young people think of the convent or the priesthood in the second

**THE  
GERM OF  
VOCA-  
TION**

year of high school, but take no care to foster the thought, and it disappears. It is natural that some should change their mind and learn that the priesthood or the convent is not their place, even though the thought of entering had occurred to them. But there are others who, by thinking of the "good time" to be had in the world, the success to be attained in social life, or the wealth they may acquire, choke out the thought of serving Christ in the priesthood or religious life. Like the rich young man in the Gospel (Mark X, 21-23), they hesitate to make the sacrifice of self-interest or of whatever else they hold dear, and Christ passes on to call another.

A vocation is a suggestion, an invitation, which, like a delicate young plant, has to be nourished and to be protected from the frost of worldliness. It must be watered with spiritual graces, refreshed with prayer, strengthened by sacrifices and deepened by thought and study. You should seek advice on how to strengthen your vocation. Pray often to Christ that you may fulfill His will. Carefully avoid persons, places, occasions, and books that would turn you away from your vocation. Show Christ that you are at least seriously considering His wish to enter His service.

Christ does not always give absolute certainty of His call, because He wishes to leave room for merit on your part. He suggests, just to see how you will re-



ceive the idea. You must not think that you ought to get a taste of the world and its pleasures before you give yourself to Christ. Be generous and make Christ your first choice, not your second. This does not refer, however, to those who never thought of a vocation in school, and got it only after they had been some years in the world.

## APPLICA- TIONS

1. No two are called in the same way. St. Augustine was rescued from the mire of sin, while St. John Berchmans had always kept his soul unsullied. Mother Seton had been a non-Catholic and the wife of a non-Catholic. She was converted after her husband's death and later became the foundress of a religious congregation. Different types of individuals may be employed by God for His work.

2. A vocation may perhaps be had for the asking. Have you ever prayed for a vocation to be a priest or a nun? Sometimes God's grace takes hold in hearts where it is least expected to work.

3. If your parents need your financial support, it is evident that God does not want you to desert them. But some young people have to resist the ambitions of worldly-minded parents, who seek social careers for their children instead of permitting them to hide their lives with Christ in God. The world will always want you, and will put forth its claims in a very appealing way. No doubt the road of the cross seems hard to

many, but those who never take it never know the sweetness of it, or the contentment which it brings.

4. How may worldly-minded persons acquire the power of self-denial?

5. A number of young people may feel the inclination to serve Christ, but lack the strength of resolution. What might aid them to become men and women of decision and character?

6. Study the following tribute from Bishop Spalding, who says that his heart thrills with emotion when he turns his thought to "that innumerable army of virgins, angels of innocence and purity, who in every age and in many lands lead the life of solitude and contemplation, of simplicity and benignity; who, though clothed in austere garb, bear brave and cheerful hearts, aglow with love, while they minister to the sick, the abandoned, the fallen, whether crushed by the weight of sin or that of solitary age and poverty; who nourish and form the religious spirit in childhood, making it reverent, devout, chaste; who offer ceaseless prayers to heaven and give to the world the highest examples of what Christ would have His followers become; working without a thought of what men may say of them, telling their good deeds not even to God" (5-b).

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### THE FOREIGN MISSIONS

**THE NEED** All men were made for God. Hence, their greatest need is to adopt the right attitude in regard to Him. Since Christ brought into this world the correct way of acting toward God, it is to the advantage of all men to learn this way. They need Christ.

Almost two-thirds (1,166,000,000) of the people of the world have never known the doctrine of Christ. Certainly, if paganism is an error, if irreligion is a mistake, then this billion of people are in need of the truths which Christ brought into the world. They are in need of zealous missionaries who will bring them the Gospel of Christ. Should there not be among you some who are willing to carry that message to the pagans? The need is for self-sacrificing men and women who will not flinch at the prospect of suffering for Christ in order to get His words into millions of hearts who have yet to know Him.

**THE COST** The cost is high in what most young people love. It would cost you much comfort and many good times if you were to become a

missionary. It is not easy to leave friends, parents, country, and, perhaps, a comfortable fortune. You would have to forget self and to seek only the companionship of Christ and of the souls that are dear to Him.

Does such a sacrifice repel or discourage you? It need not do so. There is in boys and girls something which, when aroused, enables them to turn their backs on what the world holds dear and to walk the lonely path of forest or jungle in search of "sheep that have no shepherd." You are just as capable as any other group of young Catholics, of giving up luxuries, once you know what friendship with Christ means.

True, life *does* seem attractive here, and not many encouragements are given to those who seek to spread God's kingdom, but when they resolve to do a thing, good Catholics do not count the cost—they simply go ahead and do it.

## THE MOTIVE

Why leave home for the pagans?

Why suffer all manner of hardships?

Why give up fine secular prospects?

Simply because missionary work is part of Christ's programme; because pagans have souls—spiritual and immortal souls like your own; because God loves them; because Christ relies on those who already know Him to carry His Name and Gospel to those who still sit in the valleys of darkness.

You would go to the pagan, not to bring him Ameri-

can civilization, not to rob him of his praiseworthy customs, but to enlighten him about God, about Christ, about the Redemption, and to bring him the means of saving his soul. Your love of Christ, your charity towards those who know Him not, urge you to cast off the spell of luxury and to promote the interest of Christ among His forsaken children. Christ gave up the bliss of Heaven to carry His message to mankind. Are we unwilling to give up a life of ease in order to bring spiritual life to many a noble but darkened soul? Your ancestors might never have received the Faith if some missionary had not given up the comforts of home to spread Christ's life-giving words.

**THE OB-      You say, your health would not stand**  
**JECTIONS    it!    If the doctor so advises, all right.**

But beware lest the voice of comfort be speaking to you to convince you that you are unable or unwell.

"It is too hard!" How do you know that? You can stand many more hardships than you imagine. In order to gain social position, to win for yourself a place in business, or even to indulge in pleasure, you would laugh at difficulties. If the love of Christ got hold of you, you could do the same for His sake. A cheerful spirit and proper goal make any effort possible.

You are needed here for missionary work—perhaps. Our spiritual needs here at home must be taken care

of. But the Apostles were also needed at home; still they went out to the pagans. For every place you leave vacant, God will provide a substitute in His own way.

The average groups of boys and girls feel no inclination to go to the missions, yet the duty remains of supporting and encouraging mission work. There are countless opportunities at home to help along the work in foreign fields, or in various sections of our own country. If you do not feel it your duty to go, it remains your duty to aid the missionaries.

## **APPLICA- TIONS**

1. In most mission stations, a medical unit is required. This provides opportunities for nurses and doctors to go to the foreign missions. The "Brothers" are the right hand of the missionary. There is a great need of vocations to the brotherhood.

2. Should not every high school student feel an obligation to give up sweets and entertainments now and then, in order to contribute towards the Propagation of the Faith? What could your school do?

3. Make a study of the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, and see if you cannot establish it in your school.

4. Get a map of the world and see if you can find the places to which the Gospel has never penetrated. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith (343 Lexington Ave., N. Y.) publishes the "Little Atlas



of Catholic Missions," and a monthly magazine, "Catholic Missions"; the Society of the Divine Word (Techny, Ill), "*Our Missions*" and the "*Little Missionary*"; Maryknoll (Ossining, N. Y.), the "*Field Afar*," and so forth.

## CHAPTER XLIX

### PRO DEO ET PATRIA

**WHY YOU** All creatures have been created for  
**ARE A** the greater honor and glory of God.  
**CATHOLIC** You, as a Catholic, are one of God's  
creatures that has been the object of  
special gifts. Your soul and your Faith are a gift  
from God. Christ is a gift. The Church is a gift.  
And only eternity will reveal the purposes that God  
had in bestowing these gifts on you.

You ought, however, to realize that you have been called to be a Catholic, not only for your own salvation, but also to exemplify to the world the goodness of the unseen Director of the Universe. You are a Catholic for others as well as for yourself. If God's graces find a favorable soil in your heart, and if you live up to the principles of Christ, only the Lord in heaven knows how many may be led to God through your efforts. You are to prove to an unbelieving world the practical value of the Christian religion. Your Faith was entrusted to your care for the benefit of others as well as of yourself; accordingly, "let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven" (Matt. v, 16).

Each boy and girl is proud of the family name he bears. It is your privilege to bear God's Name, to carry it everywhere, to glorify it and to defend its honor. There are legions fighting the battles of the devil, and are you to remain unmoved? Let it be your aim to aid men to see beneath the surface of things, and to find there the workings of a God Who is kind and all-good. If you muster up enough courage to enter the lists as God's champion, He will direct your ways according to His own sweet purposes. "They that seek the Lord shall not be deprived of any good" (Ps. XXXIII).

**YOUR  
CONTRI-  
BUTION  
TO AMER-  
ICAN LIFE**

There are those who maintain that they could master life without God. But science and education have failed to satisfy the deeper yearnings of the human heart. Despite all our education, despite all the wonders of science, you will note that each year thousands attach their hearts to some passing fad that holds out a pretended secret of happiness. Some of these fads parade under the name of religion. All of them assume a vague and high-sounding title. It is sad to see the vast numbers that vainly seek for contentment in such fads. Many of these victims are in reality searching for God, but they never think of looking to the right source—God's Church.

It is here that you have a contribution to make to the

welfare of the American people. Your contribution is to be in the form of a personality energized to goodness and strength by friendship with Christ. There are indeed noble lives that are not Catholic, but, in the long run, it is the Christlike life alone that can stand the strain. He alone lives truly who lives for God. You must demonstrate that friendship with Christ enables you to live out Christ's principles.

He alone who is attached to God's laws is a good citizen of his country. But men will come to recognize the power of religion only when they see that you have builded your strength on religion. To the twentieth century, you are to preach anew Christ crucified and to show an unbelieving generation that the Cross can still influence human conduct.

You know why you are here; you are not tossed about by every wave of religious opinion; you are not subject to the pitiable conceits of the self-styled patriot. To bring before the eyes of Americans a life that has been made strong and virtuous by deep faith in God is, then, the task before you. Friendship with Christ will enable you to develop such a life.

So prevalent is dishonesty, divorce, and vice of every kind that many high school students who are without religion come to the conclusion that such things are necessary; that unity of marriage, and honesty, with all the other virtues, are impossible for the average person. Your task is to prove to the world that such

things are not only possible, but necessary for the welfare of society.

## THE FUTURE

Probably before this century closes, there will again come "times that try men's souls." In such a period, your deep faith in God will carry the principles of this country through storm-tossed seas. The future struggles will not be so much in the political field as in that of education and religion. It will be a question of fundamental principles of right and wrong, of God's right to have His laws obeyed by all men. There will not be lacking those who will explain away all supernatural religion. Against such, you must stand out like a rock. They will accuse you of being traitors for believing in God and in the divinity of Christ. But your country will stand only as long as the majority can truthfully say: "In God we trust." For the good of your fellow-men, you are to see to it that trust continues to be placed in God.

## APPLICATIONS

1. The following sentence sums up your task: "The cause of Christ, and civil liberty, as one, and proceeding to one glorious end." Discuss the meaning.

2. Read "American Democracy and Catholic Doctrine," by S. J. McNamara (Catholic Truth Society, Brooklyn).

3. Christ said, "You are the salt of the earth." What did He mean?

4. Is the making of money a legitimate aim in life? Does the accumulation of wealth entail an obligation to use it for other purposes besides family advancement?



## CHAPTER L

### THE END IS BUT A BEGINNING

#### **THE AIM OF YOUR LIFE**

It is a great day in anyone's life when he comes to a full realization that life here below is but a preparation for eternity. The first lesson of this book showed you that life is a game, a test of your loyalty to Christ, Who came to open Heaven for you and to show you how to reach it. Life is a game because it determines whether or not you are willing to defeat the deceits of the world, to accept the principles of Christ and to form your character according to them. Eternity is life with God, life with Christ, your Leader. The aim of life here on earth is to enable you to shape yourself for a blessed eternity.

We have said that Christ is your Leader and model; and also that He is your very life. The point for you to remember is that all throughout life your aim must be so to shape your character that you may be acceptable to your Leader. In all the world, there is nothing more interesting than to watch the manner in which a boy or a girl sets about shaping himself or herself after the rules laid down by Jesus Christ. The work is to

go on for your whole life time. Christ is watching you and is ready to aid you. The entire heavenly court is watching you. Your fellowmen are watching you. Your guardian angel also watches you. Christ expects you to start modeling yourself after Him while you are young, because it is hard to change old people. Do not think that you can put off the task until you are old. "To me to live is Christ," should always be your motto.

**THE  
VALUE  
OF THE  
CHURCH  
TO YOU**

Environment is not always favorable for working out the ideas of Christ. The forces of evil, your own faltering decisions, and the silent influence of those who are close to you, may turn you away bit by bit from the work of character formation.

It is here that the Church seeks to aid you. She is your spiritual mother. We have tried to show you that she is the voice of Christ. The wisdom of God is behind her teachings. She interprets life safely for you from the viewpoint of eternity. "It is not the purpose and end of Christ's religion to make men rich and comfortable; it is its purpose and end to lift them to worlds where riches and comforts cease to have value or meaning" (5-c). Thus, when weary with the battle, when weakening in the contest, turn to your tried and experienced Mother for light and direction.

**YOUR  
LIFE IS  
WHAT  
YOU  
MAKE IT**

The end of a high-school course is but the beginning of a larger course in life. The accomplishment of one task will but lead you on to another. You are now at the end of this course, yet you are only at the beginning of its results. You have only made a beginning of the process of acquiring friendship with Christ. Try gradually to increase your insight into His life. Keep the New Testament near you: preserve the presence and the memory of Him within your heart. If this course is to influence your life, then you must make the prayerful and earnest effort that is required of anyone who seeks to work out a Christian truth. You must frequently think over the idea of friendship with Christ and year after year grow more intimate with Him. There will always be something new for you in your study of Christ.

The responsibilities of life will soon begin to weigh upon you; grim realities will soon confront you. Whoever or whatever succeeds in occupying most of your thinking time will, in the end, win you and your heart. You will make some mistakes in your choices; you will frequently fall far below what you expected of yourself; but that need not worry you. Stick to your determination to win in the struggle with selfishness, with worldliness, with excesses, with inactivity.

He who once hung suspended on the Cross has faith

in you. Let no one tell you that your presence in life does not mean much. It means the success or failure of a special work of God; namely, the salvation or damnation of a human being endowed with a spiritual, an immortal soul. Christ, Who went to prepare a place for His followers, hopes one day to welcome you. St. Paul calls Christ the "Author and Finisher of Faith." Christ began a good work in you; if it is to be finished, you must gradually work into His friendship. This is a work that must go on after leaving school. If Christ is to be the "Finisher" of *your* Faith, you must keep close to His presence. Live so that Christ can joyfully meet you at the end of life. (Look up Hebrews XII, 2.) Life is your chance to make yourself worthy of that place. Home and Church and school have given you directions and aid. Now see how you can work out the ideas contained in this book.

You have but one life to live. Live it as a Catholic. Live it as a man or a woman who keeps faith in high ideals, faith in the Church, faith in the things of eternity.

"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Fill your "hours of prayer with His absorbing presence, with His invigorating company, the loving admiration of this most Beautiful of the sons of men, the joy of His friendship, the interpretation of His mind, sympathy with the gladness and sorrows of His heart."

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